



PATIENCE.

I. Short sc.



PATIENCE.

I. Short sc.

B: The ART of *J. Sulston*
^K
Patience

UNDER ALL
Afflictions.

An APPENDIX to the ART of
Contentment.

By the AUTHOR of
THE WHOLE DUTY OF MAN, &c.

*It is good that a Man should both hope, and quietly wait
for the Salvation of the Lord, Lam. 3. 26.*



London, Printed for W. Cademan, in the Lower-
Walk of the New-Exchange, in the Strand.
MDC LXXXIV.

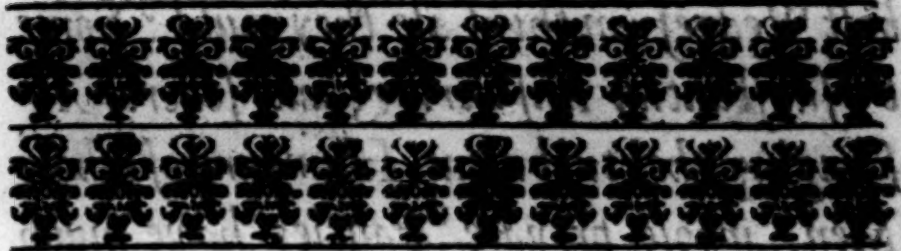
The ART of
Patience
UNDER ALL
Afflictions.
AN APPENDIX TO THE ART OF
Contentment.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
THE WORKS OF MARY, &c.



Printed by J. G. & J. H. Stanger, 25, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4.

Printed for J. G. & J. H. Stanger, 25, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4.



THE PREFACE

That Religion is somewhat out of joynt, when Christian Conversation goes not even, as it ought, with Christian Profession, it is so apparent, that it cannot be denied; for such, and so sensible is the Defect, that thereby the whole Body is not a little blemished.

Those whose Hearts desire is, that Israel may be saved, and whose true Charity is daily used, to beseech God for the Good of All, have not only lifted up humble Hands to Heav'n, but also endeavour'd by painful Labours, to seek the

The Preface.

best Redress in this Case they could : Some by substantial Answering, and soberly Asswaging the turbulent Humours of those Men, whose private Fancies have much hindred higher Proceedings in matters of Faith and Salvation.

Others, by Devout and Learned Exhortations, in seeking to put a Stop to those Evils, which Atheism would in great likelihood bring upon this declining World : Both labouring to keep up the Doctrine of Christ, and to keep some Remembrance of him in the Minds of Men, before all be too far out of square, or come to unrecoverable Ruin.

But here may we not demand of the diligent Observers of our Imperfections abroad, whose manner is, so much to strike upon one String, and by this defect take occasion to call in question, nay, to bring in open Obloquy our Christian Religion ; Are none fal'n at home from the ancient Sincerity, and harmless Devotion of former and better Ages of the Church ?

Some

The Preface.

Some State-medling Actions, those uncharitable Censures, in clean shutting-out from the Household of Faith, and Hope of Life, those who have precious Souls to save as well as others; and bear, I trust, as sincere a Love to Christ Crucified, as themselves; may put them in mind, that we may all bear a part together in that Song of Mercy, Cleanse us O Lord!

Have we not all Cause enough to bethink our selves, whether these be not the Days that our Saviour speaks of, Matth. 24. 12. Wherein Iniquity shall abound? Was ever that old Complaint of Hilary more truly verified? For says he; While there is strife in Words, while there is question in Invocations, while there's occasion in Doubts, while there is a difficulty in Consent, none is of Christ.

For those busie Spirits nearer home, who would needs Govern, before they have well learn'd to Obey, and that at their

The Preface.

first boarding, must needs sit at the Helm to guide all, how raw, how unskilful soever: But Experience hath long since taught the World, by the Ruin of the Eastern Church, how dangerous it is to sail in a Ship, where the Pilots are of that Disposition to be quarrelling within themselves.

These Mens new Devices, in matters of meer Conceit, have long seem'd unto themselves better than all the Wisdom of the World: But may we intreat them, at the least, to recount with themselves their own Folly, in making (as they have done) a Perfection of Godliness, to call and reckon others Ungodly; and this cursed scoffing at Noah's Nakedness, a Sport to delight their sour Austerity.

Would to God, these turbulent Spirits would listen to the grave Counsel of Saint Chrysostom; If with a desire of judging, thou wouldst needs be a Judge, I will shew thee the Judgment-Seat, which shall be advantageous

The Preface.

gious to thee, and no way touch thy Conscience; let thy Mind and Thought sit down to give Sentence, call forth all thy Offences, and begin to say with thy self; Why hast thou done this, or that?

This private examining of themselves, would soon make these public Controulers of all others, by plausible Pretences of Reformation, to look nearer home, and subdue that in themselves, which they are apt to spy out in others. St. Paul blamed their Course, whose manner was to go from House to House, Tit. 1. 13. Esau, that lost the Blessing, was hunting abroad; but Jacob, that had the Blessing, and the Inheritance, did keep at home, Gen. 17. 30. The Just Man, saith Solomon, is the first Accuser of himself; and Judah spake humbly of an Offender, when he said; She is more Righteous than I, Gen. 38. 26.

The Preface.

But let these hot Spirits take along with them this Information, That Obedience is better than Sacrifice; and that he that giveth Grace to the Humble, is also said to resist the Proud: And they may be well assured, this slight Stuff will shrink, when it comes to the wetting; this Counterfeit-Coyne will prove Dross, when it shall be put to the great Tryal. An easier matter it is for these Devisers to reprove others, than to amend themselves; as, Those who have a Blemish in their Eye, think the Skie to be ever Cloudy. Nothing more common with troublesome Dispositions, which have not known the Way of Peace, than to be ever Contending, seldom Contented.

The Elements, though in quality divers; yet do they all accord, for the Constitution of the Corporeal Nature.

And I would to God, that all who profess, and call themselves Christians, would

The Preface.

would accord together for the Conservation of the Church, That Peace may dwell in our Land.

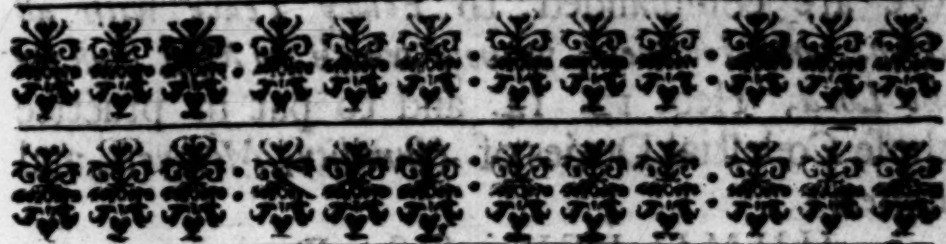
We are all Sheep of that Fold, whereof Christ is the Shepherd; We are all Stones of that Building, whereof He is the Corner-Stone; We are all Branches of that Vine, whereof He is the Stock: We have but One God for our Father, that Created us all; One Christ Jesus our Saviour, that Redeemed us; and One Holy Ghost to our Sanctifier, that doth Adorn us all.

We are but Pilgrims and Strangers; and we shall one Day find, that a Peaceable Christian Life, with a good Departure from this World, shall stand us more in stead, than all the World besides. When after much Jangling, and beating our Brains, in contradicting one another, we shall find at the last, that Peace, and a good Conscience, is worth more than all this World can afford: And therefore, beseech we God, That Mercy
and

The Preface.

and Truth may meet together, that
Righteousness and Peace may kiss
each other; and that his Glory may
dwell in our Land, until we come to dwell
in the Land of Glory.

THE



The ART of
Patience
UNDER ALL
Afflictions.

S E C T. I.

Of the Connexion between Humility, Meekness, and Patience.

I. **G**OD, who is the Fountain of all Goodness, and from whom cometh *Every good and perfect Gift*, Jam. i. 17. hath laid down such Rules and Precepts in *Holy Scripture*, that whosoever uses his utmost Diligence in the search of them,

them, *Shall find in them Eternal Life*, John 5. 39. We are commanded to *Follow Peace with all Men, and Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. and to put in practice those *Cœlestial Duties of Humility, Meekness, and Patience.*

2. HUMILITY is first a Duty we owe to God, which is to have such a Sense of our Unworthiness, and his Excellency, as may operate in us a lowly and unfeign'd Submission to Him: Now, this Submission is twofold; *First*, To his Will; *Secondly*, To his Wisdom. The Submission to his Will is of two sorts, Obedience and *Patience*: Obedience is our ready yielding up our selves with cheerfulness to do what his Divine Will and Pleasure is pleased to command us; and to enable us to perform This, *Humility* is exceeding necessary: And, to acquire to our selves this Obedience, we must endeavour to possess our Hearts with the Sense of that great unspeakable Distance, that is between God and us. Consider Him as he is a God of Infinite Majesty, Power, and Glory; and We poor Worms of the Earth: He of Infinite Purity and Holiness; and We polluted and defiled, dead in Trespasses and Sins: He of Power able to do all things; and We able to do nothing, but by his Divine Assistance.

3. A *Second* sort of Submission to his Will, is *Patience*; the Subject-matter of our Discourse. This stands in suffering his Will, as that of Obedience did in acting it; and is composed of a willing quiet Yielding to what ever Afflictions God is pleased to lay upon us: In this, *Humility* is

is a great Help, and makes things easie to us; and will perswade us not to grudge, murmur, or repine at any thing *God* does; but let what Afflictions soever come, though they be in the heaviest kind, we may be always ready to say, *Thy Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven*: and with old *Eli*, when that great Affliction came upon him, of *Gods* threatning the Destruction of his *Family*, the Loss of the *Priesthood*, the Cutting off both his *Sons* in one Day; yet considering it was the *Lord*, inabled him calmly and quietly to yield to them, saying, *Let him do what seemeth him good*, 1 Sam. 3. 18. The same Effect it had on *David*, in his Affliction; *I was dumb, I opened not my Mouth, because Thou didst it*, Psal. 39. 9. *God* doing it, silenc'd all Murmurings and Repinings in him: and it must work the same Effect in us, in all our Afflictions, if we intend to make our selves Possessors of this Duty of *Patience*.

4. THEREFORE, when ever *God* strikes, we are not only *patiently* to lie under his *Rod*, but kiss it also; that is, be truly thankful to Him, that he is pleased not to *Give us over to our own Hearts Lusts*, Psal. 18. 12. But still continuing his tender Care over us; sending *Afflictions* as so many *Messengers*, to call us home to himself. From whence we may learn, what a gross Folly it is to murmur at those Stripes, which are meant so graciously.

5. THIS Duty is not compleated, by only a Quietness and Thankfulness under *Afflictions*; but there must be *Fruitfulness* also, or all the rest will be of no Advantage to us; which is the bring-

bringing forth that, which the *Afflictions* were sent to work in us; viz. the Amendment of our Lives: So that, in Time of *Affliction*, it is a necessary Duty to call our selves to Account, to examine our Hearts and Lives, and make a severe Scrutiny, what Sins lie upon us, which have provoked *God* thus to scourge us; and whatsoever we find our selves guilty of, humbly to confess to *God*, and immediately to forsake them; Redeeming what we have lost, for the Time to come.

6. OUR next Duty concerning *Patience*, is, That we are as much bound to comply with one sort of *Sufferings*, as another, whether they be immediately from *Gods* Hand, as *Sickness*, loss of *Friends*, or the like; or whether it be from Men, who sometimes are Instruments of Afflicting us; and no Man can do us hurt, without *Gods* Permission: and *God* may as well make them the Instruments of punishing us, as to do it more directly by Himself; for it is but a Counterfeit *Patience*, that pretends to submit to *God*, and yet can bear nothing from Men. We see an Instance in Holy *Job*, who is recorded in Sacred Scripture, as a Pattern of true *Patience*; he made no such Difference in his *Afflictions*; but took the loss of his Cattle, which the *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans* robb'd him of, with as much *Meekness*, as he did that which was consumed by *Fire* from *Heaven*. Therefore, whatever we suffer from Men, if it be never so unjust in respect of them, we are humbly to confess it is most just in respect of *God*; and, instead of looking upon them with *Rage* and *Revenge*, as
the

SECT. I. *Its Connexion with Humility, &c.* 5

the common Custom of the World is, we are to look up to *God*, and acknowledge his Justice in the *Affliction*; imploring his Pardon most earnestly for those Sins, which have provoked Him to Wrath against us, and *patiently* and thankfully to bear those Sufferings, till He shall in his own good Time, see fit to remove them; still saying with *Job*, *Blessed be the Name of the Lord*, *Job* 1. 21.

7. A *Second* sort of Submission contain'd in *Humility*, is to the Wisdom of *God*; and that is, to acknowledge him Infinitely Wise: And whatsoever He doth, we must confess it the best and fittest to be done: and this Confession we are to put in practice, both in his Commands, and in his disposing and ordering of all things. *First*, Whatsoever He commands us to believe, we are to believe, how impossible soever it seems to our shallow Understandings. *Secondly*, To do what-ever He commands us to do, how opposite soever it be to our Carnal Reason and Humour; and to conclude in both, that his *Commandments* are most reasonable, and they are not grievous, 1 *Joh.* 5. 3.

8. NEXT, we are to submit to his Wisdom, in disposing and ordering of Things; which is to acknowledge, He disposes of all Things most wisely: not only to the World in general; but in what concerns every one of us, in particular: So that, in what Condition soever we are in, *We are to be Content*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 8. and not to be impatient and disturb'd, at any Choice which *God* makes; since He chuses for us, who cannot err: But to leave all things
to

to Him, to fit us with such an Estate and Condition, as He sees best for us. Perhaps, it may not please our unreasonable Humours, because we cannot live in that Splendour, equal to our Superiours: and the Reason is, we are so full of our selves, that we can see nothing beyond it. We expect *God* should place us, where we have a mind to be, though by it He discompose the whole Scheme of his Providence: But He, like a Wise Master-Builder, knows that every Stone is not fit for the Corner, nor every little Rafter for the main Beam: And sure, there cannot be a more vile Contempt of the Divine Wisdom, than to dispute his Choice, who knows what is fitter for us, than we do our selves. Therefore, when ever we are disappointed of any of our Aims or Wishes, let us not only *patiently*, but joyfully submit to it; and acknowledge, that it is certainly best for us, it being chosen by the unerring Wisdom of our Heavenly Father.

9. HAVING spoken of the *Humility* due towards *God*; I am now to speak of *Humility*, as it concerns our selves; which will be found no less necessary than the former. This *Humility* is of two sorts; the first is, the having a mean and low Opinion of our selves; the second is, being content that others should have so of us. The first of these is contrary to Pride, and the second to Vain-glory. Pride cast the Angels out of Heaven; and it is the greatest Sin the Devil himself hath ere-been guilty of: and we may frequently find in Scripture the hainousness of it set forth, Prov. 16. 5. *Every one that is proud in Heart,*

SECT. I. *Its Connexion with Humility, &c.* 7

Heart, is an abomination to the Lord ; and in Chap. 6. among many things which the Lord hates, a Proud Look is set as the first of them. It is indeed a most prolific Vice, and there are few Sins to which it is not either Parent or Nurse to : There are many Places of Scripture, which shews the detestableness of this Sin ; I shall only add one, James 4. 7. That God resisteth the Proud, but giveth Grace to the Humble.

10. AND the means of relinquishing this Sin of *Pride*, is perform'd by *Humility*, by these following Directions : *First*, We are to consider the hainousness of the Sin, with that Regret as may operate in us no petty Contemt, but a deep and irreconcilable Hatred against it. *Secondly*, To be vigilant over our own Hearts, that they foment not any Originals of it, never suffering them to feed on the Phantasm of our own Magnificence : But when ever such Cogitations arise, let us reverberate it immediately with the Memorial of some of our Follies and Vices ; so we may make this very Motion of *Pride* an occasion of *Humility*. *Thirdly*, We are to make no Comparison of our selves with those we think are more foolish and vicious than we are, lest we fall into the same Snare with the *Pharisee*, Luk. 16. 11. Extol our selves for being better : But if we will compare, and associate our selves, let us do it with the Wise, Sober, and Religious ; and there we shall find, we come so far short of 'em, that we can have no high Esteem of our selves, but rather a more Submission to *Humility*, than we had before. *Lastly*, Let us humbly and earnestly invoke the *Almighty*,

That he would eradicate all Degrees of this Sin in us, and make us of the number of those that are *Poor in Spirit*, Matth. 5. 3. to whom the Blessing even of Heaven it self, is pronounced and promised.

11. THE next Vice in opposition to *Humility*, is *Vain-glory*; which is a hungry and thirsting after the Praise of Men: and, first, that it is a Sin, the Words of our Saviour prove it, John 5. 44. *How can ye believe, that receive Honour one of another?* So that, it is not only a Sin, but such a one as hinders the Reception of *Christ* into the Heart. Secondly, The great danger of this Sin is such, if it keep *Christ* out of our Hearts, it brings us to inevitable Destruction; for all our Hope and Safety of escaping the Wrath to come, depends in our Reception of Him: And this Sin, where-ever it takes Possession in the Minds of Men, it endangers the being guilty of many others; and he that seeks so much for popular Applause, may be in danger of the Mobile's Flipping, and without Repentance, may be at last in danger of *Hell Fire*, Matth. 5. 22.

12. THIRDLY, The Folly of it is, we pursue after nothing but a Blast of Wind, the Breath of Men, which brings us in nothing of real Advantage. Secondly; It is not only unprofitable, but dolorous and difficult also; for he that eagerly seeks Praise, is not at all Master of himself, but must suit all his Actions to that End and Purpose; and, contrary to what his own Reason and Conscience dictates to him, must take care to do what will bring him in
Com-

SECT. I. *Its Connexion with Humility, &c.* 9

Commendations ; and so enslaves himself to every one that hath but a Tongue, to extol him. And this Sin is further hurtful ; when it is used in Religious Duties, or any Christian Acts, it destroys all the Fruits of it : They that pray, or distribute Alms to be seen of Men, must accept of that for their Portion ; Matth. 6. 2. *Verily, I say unto you, They have their Reward ;* for they must expect none from God, but the Reward of those Hypocrites, *that love the Praise of Men, more than the Praise of God :* And they that make such a miserable Exchange, are not only guilty of Folly, but are in danger of *losing their own Souls,* Mark 8. 36.

13. AND the Remedies against this Vice, are these : *First,* We are to keep a strict Watch over our selves, and to observe in any Christian Duty, whether we consider the Praise of Men ; or in the most indifferent Action, whether we have not an earnest Inclination of it ; and if we find our selves leaning that way, we must endeavour to have a severe Eye upon it ; and when ever we find it moves, reprehend and resist it. *Secondly,* Let this be our Design, to please God ; that when we go about any thing, we may make this inquiry, Whether it hath his Approbation : and then we shall have no time, to think what Praise it will bring us from Men ; for it is a greater Benefit for us to please God, who is able to give us Eternal Rewards ; than Men, whose Applauses are vain and empty ; and none of us can but think it reasonable, to make the former our only Care. *Thirdly,* If at any time we receive Praise of Men,

let us not be much over fond of it, nor think a tittle the better of our selves: If it be Vertue we are esteemed for, we must remember it came from the Hand of *God*, and return Him the Glory; and not think any Part of it belongs to our selves. Indifferent Actions can deserve no Praise, and bad Ones ought to set us a trembling, instead of rejoycing; else that Woe of our Saviour belongs to us; Luk. 6. 26. *Woe unto you, when Men speak well of you; for so did their Fathers to the False Prophets:* and there is not a greater Appearance of an hardned Heart, than when Men can make their Sins the Object of their Glory.

14. THE next Vertue is *Meekness*, which is composed of a Calmness and Quietness of Spirit, opposite to the Rage and Impatiencies of Anger. This Vertue is a Duty to *God*, of which I have already spoken of under the Head of *Humility*; and it may be exercised towards our Neighbour, and towards our selves: I shall begin with that towards our selves. *First*, Of the Advantage we receive by it; which is this, We have the Blessing which *Christ* hath pronounced, Matth. 5. 5. *Blessed are the Meek*; not only in the World to come, but in this likewise, *They shall inherit the Earth*: and indeed, none hath a more perfect Enjoyment of themselves, than Meek Persons: for the Angry, and Impatient, can never enjoy the greatest Prosperities; and the uneasiness of this Passion is such, that it raises Storms within their own Breasts, and a great Perturbation upon their Spirits.

15. SE-

15. SECONDLY, We acquire Honour to our selves by it ; for we resemble *Christ*, that blest Pattern of Meekness: *Learn of me*, saith he, *for I am meek and lowly in Heart*, Matth. 11. 28. And by it we conquer our selves, and our own unruly Passions, which is the greatest and most noble Victory. *Thirdly*, It makes us deport our selves like Men, whereas Anger turns us to the Fierceness and Wildness of Savage Beasts: The One is by all esteemed, and the Other abhorred ; every one shunning an outrageous Man, as they would a tameless Beast. Moreover, *Meekness* causeth a sober Mind ; whereas Anger is direct Madness, and makes him incapable of being his own Master ; causing him to do those things, as himself, in his serious Temper, utterly detests. Many Men have committed those things in their Rage, which they have repented all their Life after. Therefore, seeing how much Anger resembles Beastiality, a mad Man than a sober Man, let us embrace this Vertue of *Meekness*, and abandon the contrary Vice of *Anger*.

16. MEEKNESS, in the next place, makes the worst Condition tolerable and easie ; and if we meekly bear any Suffering, it takes off the Edge of it, that it cannot wound us ; whereas they that rage and swell at it, whets it, and makes it more keen and sharper than it would be ; as in the case of reproachful Words, which in themselves can do no hurt to our Bodies nor Estates ; all the Mischief they can do us, is to make us angry ; and then our Anger will create more Strife and Debate, and animate the

Esposued Party but more against us: Whereas he that *meekly* passes them by, is never the worse, but the better; for he shall be rewarded of *God* for that *Patience*: and *St. Paul* to *Titus*, gives us this Advice, *To speak Evil of no Man, to be no Brawlers, but gentle, shewing all Meekness unto all Men*, Tit. 3. 2.

16. AND the Means to obtain this Vertue, are these: *First*, To make a deep Impression in our Minds, of the Loveliness and Benefits of *Meekness*, together with the Deformity and Mischief of *Anger*. *Secondly*, To set before our selves the Example of our Blessed Lord and Saviour, who indured all Reproaches and Torments, with a perfect *Patience*, that was *Led as a Sheep to the Slaughter*, Isa. 53. 7. *That when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatned not*, 1 Pet. 2. 23. *Thirdly*, To be very vigilant in preventing the first Beginings of *Anger*; and to that end, we must mortifie all inward Peevishness and Frowardness of Mind, which is a Sin in it self, if it proceed no further; but if cherish'd, will break out into open Effects of Danger. Therefore, when ever thou find'st the least Motion of it within thee, make as much haste to check it, as thou wouldst to quench a Fire in thy House: and be sure to keep a strict Watch over thy Tongue, that it break not out into any angry Expressions; for that Breath will fan the Fire, not only in thine Antagonist, but thy Self too: Therefore, though thy Heart be ardent within, suffocate the Flame, that it break not out; and the greater the Temptation is, the more earnestly

SECT.I. *Its Connexion with Humility, &c.* 13

nestly call upon *God* to assist thee to conquer it. *Fourthly*, Often call to mind the great Punishments thy sins have deserved; and then, whether thy Afflictions be from *God* or Man, thou wilt acknowledge them to be far short of what thou deservest; and wilt be ready to blush at thy great Impatience.

B 4

SECT.

S E C T. II.

In time of Sickness.

1. **W**HAT should we do in this Vale of Tears, but condole each others Miseries? Every Man hath his weight, and happy is he whose Burthen is so easie, that he may help his Neighbours. Many have waded through a World of Sorrows; and the Angel of the *Lord*, that hath Redeemed their Souls from all Evil, and hath led them within few Paces of the Shore, offers to lend thee his Hand, to guide thee in this dangerous World, wherein every Errour is Death: Let us follow him therefore with an humble Confidence, and be safe in the View and Pity of the woful Mis-carriages of others, and take warning by their sad Misfortunes.

2. **T**HOU art now cast down on thy Bed of Sickness, and with holy *David*, *Roaring all the Day long*, Psal. 32. 3. for the Extremity of thy Pain, measuring the slow Hours, not by Minutes, but by Groans: *Thy Soul is weary of thy Life*, Job 10. 1. through the Intolerable *Anguish of thy Spirit*, Job 7. 11. Of all earthly Afflictions, this is the forest: And *Job* 1. 21. after the sudden astonishing News of the Loss of his Goods and Children, could yet support himself, and *Bless the God that gives and takes*: But when
his

his Body was tormented, and made one *Boyle*, then his *Patience* is retched ſo far, as to curſe (not his *God*, but) his *Nativity*; *Job* 3. 3. *Let the Day periſh wherein I was born, and the Night in which it was ſaid, there is a Man-Child conceived.* And King *Artaxerxes* queſtioning with his Cup-bearer *Nehemiah*, could ſay, *Why is thy Countenance ſad, ſeeing thou art not ſick?* *Nehem.* 2. 2. implying that the Sick Man, of all others, hath juſt cauſe to be dejected. Worldly Croſſes are at a diſtance from us; but Sickneſs is in our Boſoms: thoſe touch Ours outwardly, theſe inwardly our Selves: Here the whole Man ſuffers. What could the Body feel without the Soul, that animates it? How can the Soul (which makes the Body ſenſible) chuſe but be moſt affected with that Pain, where-with the Body is afflicted? Both Partners have enough to do to encounter ſo fierce an Enemy, and the ſharpeſt requires the moſt powerful Reſiſtance. Therefore let us recollect our ſelves, and call up all the Powers of our Souls, to engage with ſo violent, and potent an Enemy.

3. THY Body is by a fore Diſeaſe confin'd to thy Bed: I ſhould be ſorry to ſay, thou thy ſelf wert ſo. Thy Soul, which is thy ſelf, I hope is at a diſtance from thee; that however it is content to take a ſhare in thy Sufferings, ſoars above to the Heaven of Heavens; and is proſtrate before the Throne of Grace, ſuing for Mercy and Forgiveness; beholding the Face of thy Glorious Mediator, interceding for thee. Unhappy were we, if our Souls were lockt up in our Boſoms, that they could uſe no Motion, but

but what our lumpish Bodies could contribute: But, blessed be *God*, he hath animated us with active Spirits, that can move themselves, while our Bodies lie still; that can be so quick and nimble in their Motions, as they can pass from Earth to Heaven, ere we can turn our wearied and sick Bodies to the other side.

4. AND how much shall we be wanting to our selves, if we do not make use of this Spiritual Agility; sending up these Spirits of ours, from this dull Clay of our Bodies, to those Regions of Blessedness; that they may from thence fetch Comforts to alleviate the Sorrows of their heavy Partners. Thus if thou imployest thy better Part, no Pains of the Body can make thee miserable; that Spiritual Part of thine shall ere long be in Bliss, whilst this piece of Earth lies putrified in the Grave. Why dost thou not then, even now before thy Dissolution, improve all the Powers of it to thy present Advantage? Let thy inward Eye still behold the Face of thy *God* in Glory, whilst thy Corporal Eyes look upon those Friends at thy Bed-side, which may pity, but cannot help thee.

5. THOU art pained with Sicknes: Consider seriously from whence it comes, and what makes it so bitter to thee; *Affliction cometh not out of the Dust*, Job 5. 6. Couldst thou but hear the Voice of thy Disease, as thou now feelest the Stroke of it, it hath proclaim'd loud enough, *Am I come up hither without the Lord, to torment thee? The Lord hath said to me, Go up against this Man, and afflict him*, 2 Kings 18. 25. Couldst thou

thou see the Hand that smites thee, thou wouldst be eager to kiss it; since it is thy good *God*, the Father of all Mercies, and of all Comfort and Consolation, that lays these Stripes upon thee: He that made thee, He that bought thee at so dear a Price as his own Blood; it is He that chastiseth thee: and canst thou think He would scourge thee, but for thine own Good and Advantage: For what tender Father is there, but what has Bowels of Compassion, and never takes the Rod in his Hand, out of a Pleasure he takes in chastising that Flesh, which is derived from his own Loyns? Or is it any Ease to him, to make his Child smart and bleed? But rather makes himself suffer more than he inflicts, and would be content to Redeem those Stripes with his own; yet he sees the Chastisement proper, not to spare him for his Frowardness, and many Tears; but will plead, He had not lov'd him, if he had not been so kindly severe: And *Salomon* gives us this Advice; *Chasten thy Son while there is Hope, and let not thy Soul spare for his Crying*, Prov. 19. 18. And if we that are evil, know how to give loving and beneficial Correction to our Children, how much more shall our Father which is in Heaven, know how to Chastise us for our Advantage? So as we may sing under the Rod, with the Blessed Psalmist; *I know, O Lord, that thy Judgments are right, and that thou in Faithfulness hast afflicted me*, Psal. 119. 75. Might a Child be made Arbitrator of his own Chastisement, do we think he would adjudicate himself to be Corrected? Yet the discreet Parent knows he shall wrong him, if he
give

give not due Correction; as having learned of Wise Solomon, Prov. 23. 14. *Thou shalt beat him with the Rod, and shalt deliver his Soul from Hell.* Love hath his Stroaks, saith St. Ambrose, which are so much the sweeter, the harder they are inflicted.

6. DOST thou not remember the Message the two Sisters sent to our Saviour, John 11. 3. *Lord, behold he whom thou lovest, is Sick.* Were it so, that Pain, or Sickness, or any other the Executioners of Divine Justice, should be let loose upon thee, to tyrannize over thee at Pleasure, on purpose to render thee perfectly Miserable; there were just Reason for thy utter Diffidence: but they are stinted, and march under Commission; neither can they be allowed to have any other Limits, than thy own Advantage. Hadst thou rather be Good, or be Healthful, I know thou wouldst imbrace both, and think thy self in a Happy State: For who is so little in his own Favour, as to imagine he can be the worse for faring well. But He that made thee, has a far greater Inspection into thee, than thine own Eyes can have; He sees thy Vigour is turning wanton; and that if thy Body be not sick, thy Soul will: If He therefore think it fit to take down thy worse Part a little, for the preventing of a Mortal Danger to the better, what cause hast thou to complain, yea, rather not to be thankful? When thou hast felt thy Body in a distemper of Fulness, thou hast gone to Sea on purpose to create a Sickness; yet thou knewest that turning of thy Head and Stomach would be more painful to thee,

thee, than thy former Indifpoſition. Why then ſhould not thy All-wiſe Creator take Liberty to Cure thee with an Afflictious Remedy.

7. THOU art now Sick: Wert thou not before a long time Healthful, and canſt thou not take that *patiently* which *God* hath allotted for thee? If thou haſt enjoy'd more days of Health, than hours of Sickneſs, how canſt thou think thou haſt cauſe to repine? Had the Divine Wiſdom thought fit to mitigate thy many days Pain, with the Eaſe of one hour, it had been worthy of thy Thanks: but now that he hath before hand requited thy few painful Hours, with Years of perfect Health, how unthankfully doſt thou grudge at thy Condition? It was a groſs Miſtake, if thou didſt not from all Earthly things expect a Viciffitude: They cannot have their Being, without a Change; as well may Day be without a Succeſſion of Night, and Life without Death, as a Mortal Body without Fits of Diſtemper: And how much better are theſe momentany Changes, than that laſt Change of a Miſery unchangable? It was a deplorable Word, that Father *Abraham* ſaid to the Damned Glutton; *Son, remember that thou in thy Life time receiv'ſt thy good things, and Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented,* Luk. 16. 25. How happy then are we, that are here chaſtned of the Lord, that *We may not be condemned of the World!* O then, welcom Feavers, and all other Diſeaſes of the Body, that may quit my Soul from Everlaſting Burnings!

8. THOU complain'ſt of Sickneſs; whereas many have ſhed Tears for their ſuperfluity of
of

of Health: condoling the fear and danger of losing *God's* Favour, for their not being afflicted. And *Bromiard* tells us of a Devout Man in his time, as complained at his Prosperity, as no small Affliction; whom *God* soon after accommodated with Pain enough, according to his Desires: The poor Man was joyful at the Change, and look't upon his Sickness as a Mercy; for so it was intended by Him that sent it. Why are we too much dejected with that, which others complain the want of? Why should we find that so tedious to our selves, which others have wisht to enjoy? There have been Medicinal Agues, which the wise Physician have cast his Patient into, for the Cure of a worse Distemper. A secure and lawless Health, however Nature takes it, is the most dangerous Indisposition of the Soul: if that may be healed by some few Bodily Pangs, the Advantage is unspeakable. Look upon some Vigorous Gallant, that in the height of his Spirit, and the heat of his Blood, eagerly pursues his Carnal Delights, as thinking of no Heav'n, but the free Delectation of his Sense; and compare thy present Estate with his: Here thou liest groaning and sighing, panting and shifting thy weary Sides, complaining of the heavy Pace of thy tedious Hours; whilst he is frolicking with his jocund Companions, carousing his large Healths, sporting himself with his wanton *Delilah*, and basking himself in all sensual Pleasures: And tell me, whether of the two thou thinks in the happier Condition? If thou art not shrunk into nothing but Sense, and hast not cast off all Thoughts

Thoughts of another World, thou wouldst pity the Misery of that Atheistical Jollity; and gratulate to thy self the Advantage of thy humble and faithful suffering that, which will at last make thee ample Satisfaction, by yielding thee the *Peaceable Fruit of Righteousness*, Heb. 12. 11.

9. THY Pain is grievous; but dost thou not hear the great Precedent of *Patience* crying out from his *Dunghil*; O that my Grief were thoroughly weighed, and my Calamities laid in the Balance together! For now it would be heavier than the Sand of the Sea: Therefore my Words are swallowed up; for the Arrows of the Almighty are within me, the Poison whereof drinketh up my Spirits: The Terrors of God do set themselves in Array against me, Job 6. 2, 3, 4. Dost thou not hear the Man after God's own Heart, speak of the Voice of his Roaring, Psal. 22. 1? He that shrunk not from the Bear, the Lion, nor the Giant Goliath, is now drenching his Bed with his Tears, Psal. 6. 6. Dost thou not hear the Faithful crying out, I am the Man that hath suffered Affliction by the Rod of his Wrath, &c. Surely against me he is turned; he turneth his Hand against me all the day; my Flesh and my Skin hath he made old; he hath broken my Bones, Lam. 3. 1, 3, 4. Consider the Prophets, Apostles, and Martyrs, the Great Favorites of Heav'n; some on Gridirons, others in Boiling Caldrons; some on Spits, others under the Saws; some in the Flames, others crashed with the Teeth of Wild Beasts; some on the Racks, others in Fiery Furnaces: most of them in such Torments, as in comparison whereof, thy Pains are but a Sport. But to leave Mortality, and sinful Dust
and

and Ashes, thou may'st behold the *Son of God*, and *Lord of Life*, the *King of Glory*, *God* blessed for ever, sweating Drops of *Blood* in his dreadful *Agony*; and may'st hear him cry upon the Tree of Curse and Shame; *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Matth. 27. 46. Alas, What are we capable to suffer, in proportion of these Tortures? What are we, that we should think much to share with the best of *God's* Saints, even with the dear and eternal Son of his Love, our ever blessed Redeemer? Had not *God* found this their way to get to Heaven, they had not trod so deep in Blood.

10. WHY do we repine to wet our Feet where they waded? If from these Holy Ones we turn our Eyes, we shall find Examples among meer Pagans: As for instance, he who we used to account infamous for Voluptuousness, *Epicurus* the Philosopher; who, on his Dying-day, when he lay extreamly tormented with the Stone in the *Bladder*, and a tearing *Cholick* in his *Bowels*, as it were gasping for Life; yet even then, writing to his *Idomeneus*, can out of the Strength of his Resolutions, profess his Cheerfulness; and can stile even that day Blessed. It was the same Mouth that could boast, that if he were frying in the *Brazen Bull* of *Phalaris*, he could there find Contentment. What should I tell thee of a *Mutius Scavola*, who in a Glorious Revenge, voluntarily burns off his own Right Hand, not without the Envy and Pity of his Enemies; or of a *Regulus*, that after so high a Provocation, offers himself to the worst of the merciless Fury of his Tormentors? Why shouldst

ſhouldſt thou think it ſtrange, ſaith wiſe *Seneca*, that ſome Men ſhould be well pleaſed to be ſcorch't, to be wounded, to be rack't, to be kill'd? Frugality is a pain to the Riotous, Labour is a puniſhment to the Lazy, Continence is a miſery to the Wanton, and Study a torture to the Slothful.

II. ALL theſe things are not in their own Nature difficult; but we are feeble, and falſe-hearted. Shall theſe *Pagans* attain to this height of Magnanimity, out of the Gallantry of their Manly Reſolutions? and ſhall we Chriſtians droop, and languish under gentler Sufferings? We profeſs to have the Advantage of Faith, to uphold and chear us: But poor Heathen Souls! they never heard of any Gracious Engagements of a Merciful God, to ſtand by 'em, and to comfort 'em: They never had met with thoſe ſweet Meſſages from Heaven; *Call upon me in the day of Trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou ſhalt glorifie me*, *Pſal. 50. 15.* *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you Reſt*, *Matth. 11. 28.* *Strengthen ye the Weak Hands, and confirm the Feeble Knees: ſay to them that are of a fearful Heart, Be ſtrong, fear not; behold, your God will come with Vengeance, even God with a Recompence; He will come, and ſave you*, *Iſa. 35. 3, 4.* They had not the Heart of a Job, to ſay, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*, *Job 19. 25.* nor the Eyes of a Steven, to pierce the Heav'ns, and to ſee their Saviour ſtanding at the Right Hand of God: But meerly forc'd it out in the Strength of their Natural Courage, heightened with a Vain-glorious Ambition of that Fame

G

which

which they did believe would survive 'em: Whereas we *Christians* know that we have a *God*, the Father of all Mercies, to stand by us; a Redeemer, to deliver us; a Comforter, to strengthen and refresh us; sweet and unfailable Promises, to sustain us: and, at last, a Crown of Eternal Glory, to recompence us.

12. THOU art pained with Sicknes: Look not at what thou feelest, but what thou hast deserved to feel: *Wherefore doth a living Man complain, a Man for the Punishment of his Sin?* Lam. 3. 39. Alas, the *Wages of every Sin is Death*; a double Death; of Body, and Soul; Temporal, and Eternal: Any thing below this, is Mercy. There is not the least of thy many thousand Transgressions, but hath merited the Infinite Wrath of a just *God*: and more Torments, than thou art capable to undergo. What, dost thou complain of Ease? Where thou owest a Thousand Talents, thou art bid to *Take thy Bill, and write down Fifty*, Luk. 16. 6. Wilt thou not Magnifie the Clemency of so favourable a Creditor? Surely, were every Twig which makes thee smart, a Scorpion, and every Breath that thou sendest forth, a Flame; this were yet less than thy Deserts. Oh, the Infinite Goodness of our Indulgent Father, that uses so gentle a Correction to us! Tell me, thou nice and delicate Patient, if thou canst not bear these Stripes, how thou wilt be able to endure those that are infinitely sorer? Alas! What are these to that Hell, which abides for the Impatient? There are Exquisite Pains, without Mitigation; Eternal Pains, without Intermission; which
thou

thou canst neither suffer, nor avoid: Fear them, whil'st thou murmurest at these; lay thy self low under the Hand of thy good *God*, and be thankful for a tolerable Misery. How graciously hath the Wisdom of our *God* thought fit to temper our Afflictions; so contriving them, that if they be sharp, they are not long; and if they be long, they are not over sharp; that our Strength might not be weighed down by those Trials we undergo. Therefore raise a Contentment in thy self, either thy Languishment shall be easie, or thy Pain soon over. Extream and Everlasting are Terrors reserv'd for *God's* Enemies in the other World, that is long, and of no End; that is painful, and not capable of any Relaxation. What a short Moment is it, that thou canst suffer? Short, yea nothing, in respect of that Eternity, which thou must either hope for, or fear. Endure a while *patiently*, that thou mayst not be infinitely miserable.

13. THOU complaineſt of Pain: What use were there of thy *Patience*, if thou ailedst nothing? *God* never gives Vertues, without an intent of their Exercise. To what purpose were our Christian Valour, if we had no Enemy to encounter? Thus long thou hast lien quiet in a secure Garrison, where thou hast heard no Trumpet, but thine own; and hast turned thy Drum-head into a Table for Dice, lavishing out thy Days in varieties of idle Recreations: Now *God* draws thee forth to the Field, and shews thee an Enemy; Where is thy Christian Fortitude, if thou shrink back, and Coward-

ly wheeling, chusest rather to make use of thy Heels, than thy Hands? And is this a convenient Character for thee, who professest to fight under his Banner, who is the great Conqueror of Death and Hell? Is this the way to that happy Victory, which shall carry away a Crown of Glory? If thou faint in the Day of Adversity, thy Strength is but small: Stir up thine holy Courage; *Be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might*, Ephes. 6. 10. Encounter close with that fierce Enemy, where-with thy God would have thee assaulted; looking up to him, who hath said, and cannot fail to perform it; *Be faithful to the Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life*, Revel. 2. 10.

14. THOU art surpriz'd with Sickness: Whose Fault is it, but thine own? Who forbid thee looking for so sure a Guest? The very Frame of thy Body should have put thee into other Thoughts: Dost thou see this living Fabrick made up as a Clock, consisting of so many Wheels and Gimmers? and couldst thou imagine, that some of 'em should not be ever out of order? Couldst thou think, that a Cottage not too strongly built, and standing so bleak in the very Mouth of the Winds, could for any time hold firm and strong? Or, dost thou not rather wonder, that it hath outstood so many blust'ring Blasts thus long, utterly unruin'd? It was scarce a *patient* Question, which Job asked; *Is my Strength the Strength of Stones? or is my Flesh as Brass?* Job 6. 12. Alas! thy best Metal is but Clay; and fading Flesh, is but Grass; the Clay mouldereth, and the Grass

Grafs withereth. What do we reckon of any thing, but Misery and Fickleness, in this woful Region of Change? If we will needs over-reckon our Condition, we do but help to aggravate our own Wretchedness.

15. THOU art retir'd to thy Sick-Bed: Be of good Comfort; *God* was never so near thee, never so tenderly indulgent to thee, as now. *The Whole*, saith our Saviour, *needs not a Physician, but they that are Sick*, Matth. 9. 12. The *Physician*, as being made for the time of Necessity, cometh not but where there is need; and where that is, he will not fail to come: Our Wants is motive enough to Him, who himself *took our Infirmities, and bare our Sicknesses*, Matth. 8. 17. Our Health estranges him from us: but whil'st thou art his *Patient*, He cannot be kept from thee. *The Lord*, saith the Psalmist, *will strengthen thee upon the Bed of Languishing, thou wilt make all his Bed in his Sickness*, Psal. 41. 3. The Heavenly Comforter doth not only visit, but attend thee: If thou find thy Pallet uneasie, he will turn, and soften it for thy Repose. Canst thou not read *God's* Gracious Indulgence in thine own Disposition? Thou art a Parent of Children: Perhaps, thou findest Cause to affect one more than another, though all be dear enough: But if any one of them be cast down with a Feverish Distemper, thou art more careful and busie about him, than all the rest: How thou pitiest him, and pliest him with Offers and Receipts? with what silent Anxiety dost thou watch by him? Listening for every Breathing; jealous of every Whi-

C 3

spering,

spering, that might break off his Slumber ; answering all his Groans with so many Sighs : and, in short, taking such care of him for the time, that thy greatest Darling seems the while neglected, in comparison of this more needful Charge. How much more shall the Father of Mercies, be Compassionately intent upon the Sufferings of his dear Children, according to the Proportion of their Afflictions?

16. THOU art wholly taken up with the Extremity of thy Pains : Alas, poor Soul ! Thy purblind Eyes see nothing, but what is laid close to thee : It is thy Sense which thou followest, but where is thy Faith ? Couldst thou look to the end of thy Sufferings, thou couldst not but rejoyce in Tribulation : *Let Patience have her perfect Work* ; and thou shalt once say, It is well for me that I was afflicted. Thou mightst be jocund long enough, ere thy Jollity could make thee Happy : *Yea, Woe be to them, that laugh here*, Luk. 6. 25. But, on the contrary, *Our light Affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of Glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 17. O blessed Improvement of a few Groans ! Oh glorious Issue of a short Storm of Sorrow ! Why do we imitate Christians, if we be nothing but meer Flesh and Blood ? and if we are better, we have more cause of Joy, than Complaint ; for whilst our *Outward Man perisheth, our Inward Man is renewed daily*, 2 Cor. 4. 16. Our outward Man is but Flesh, our inward is Spirit ; infinitely more noble, than this living Clay that we carry about us. Whilst our Spirit therefore gains more
than

than our Flesh is capable to lose, what reason have we not to boast of the Bargain? Let not therefore these close Curtains confine thy sight, but cast up thine Eyes to that Heaven, whence thy Soul came, and see there that Crown of Glory, which thy God holds forth to all that overcome: and *Run with Patience the Race that is set before thee; looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who is set down at the Right Hand of the Throne of God, Heb. 12. 1, 2.* Then cheer thy self with the Expectation of that Blessedness, which if thy Torments were no less than those of Hell, would make more than abundant Amends for all thy Sufferings.

17. THOU art sick to Death: Having received the Sentence of Mortality in thy self; thy Physician hath given thee up to act this last Part alone: Neither art thou like to rise any more, till the general Resurrection. How many thousands are lately dead, that would have thought it a great Happiness to die thus quietly in their Beds? whom the Storm of War hath hurried away furiously into another World, snatching them suddenly out of This; not suffering them to take leave of that Life, which they are forced to abandon: Whereas thou hast a fair Leisure to prepare thy self for the Entertainment of thy last Guest; to *set both thine House in order,* and thy Soul. It is no small Advantage to thee, thus to see Death at a distance, and to observe every one of his Paces towards thee; that thou mayst put thy self into a fit Posture to meet this grim Messenger of Heaven, who comes to fetch thee to Immortality; that dying

thus by gentle Degrees, thou hast the leisure, with the Holy Patriarch *Jacob*, to call thy Children about thee, to bequeath to each of them the dear Legacy of thy last Benediction; and that being encompassed with thy sad Friends, now in thy long Journey to a far Country, (though thine and their Home) thou mayst take a Solemn Farewell of them, as going some-what before them to the appointed happy Meeting-place of Glory and Blessedness: And lastly, That one of thine own may close up those Eyes, which shall in their next opening, see the Face of thy most Glorious *Saviour*; and see this Flesh, now ready to lie down in Corruption, made like to his unspeakable Glory.

SECT.

S E C T. III.

Affliction of Conscience.

1. **T**HY *Sin* lies heavy upon thy *Soul*: Blessed be *God*, thou art sensible of it. Many a one hath more weight upon him, and boasteth of Ease. There's Musick in this Complaint; the Father of Mercies delights to hear it, next to the Melody of Saints and Angels. Go on still, and continue these sorrowful Notes, if ever thou look'st for solid Comfort. *It is this Godly Sorrow, that worketh Repentance to Salvation, not to be repented of, 2 Cor. 7. 10.* Weep still, and make not too much haste to dry up thy Tears; for they are precious, and held fit to be reserv'd in the *Bottle of the Almighty*, Psal. 56. 8. Over-speedy Remedies may prove injurious to the Patient: And as in the Body, so in the Soul, Diseases and Tumors must have their due Maturation, 'ere there can be a perfect Cure. *The Inwards of the Sacrifice must be three times rinsed with Water, Lev. 1. 9.* One Ab-lution will not serve the turn. But when thou hast emptied thine Eyes of Tears, and unloaded thy Breast of leisurely Sighs, I shall then, by full Commission from Him that hath the Power of Remission, say to thee; *Son, be of good Comfort, thy Sins are forgiven thee, Matth. 9. 2.*

2. **T**HINK not this Word meerly formal,
and

and forceless: *He that hath the Keys of Hell, and of Death*, Revel. 1. 18. hath not said in vain, *Whose Sins ye remit, they are remitted*, Joh. 20. 23. The Words of his Faithful Ministers on Earth, are ratified in Heav'n; only the *Priest* under the Law, had Power to pronounce the *Leper* clean, Lev. 13. 3. Had any other *Israelite* done it, it had been as unprofitable, as presumptuous. It was a good Expression that fell from *Elihu*; When a Man's Soul draweth nigh unto the Grave, and his Life to the Destroyer, if there be a Messenger (of God) with him, an Interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto that Man his Uprightness; then He (i. e. God) is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down into the Pit; I have found a Ransom, Job 33. 22, 23, 24. Behold! this is thy State; the Life of thy Soul is in danger of the Destroyer, through his powerful Temptations: I am (howsoever unworthy) a Messenger sent to thee from Heav'n; and, in the Name of that Great God that sent me, do here, upon the sight of thy serious Repentance, before *Angels* and *Men*, declare thy Soul to stand right in the Court of Heaven: The Invaluable Ransom of thy dear Saviour is laid down, and accepted for thee; so thou art deliver'd from going down in the Pit of Horror and Perdition.

3. OH, happy Message, thou say'st, were it receiv'd with Comfort! But, Alas! my Heart is possess'd with deep Grounds of Fear and Diffidence, not easily to be remov'd: That condemns me, whil'st You offer to acquit me; and positively tells me, I am a worse Criminal, than a Looker-on can imagine: My Sins are beyond mea-

measure hainous, such as my Thoughts tremble at; and Tongue dare not utter to God that knows 'em, against whom only they are committed. If there is Horror in their very Remembrance; What will there be then in their Retribution?

They are bitter things that thou urgest against thy self; no Adversary could plead worse: But I admit thy Vileness; be thou as bad as Satan can make thee: It is not either his Malice, or thy Wickedness, that can shut thee out from Mercy: Be thou as foul as Sin can make thee, yet *There is a Fountain opened to the House of David, Zach. 13. 1.* (a bloody Fountain in the Side of thy Saviour) *for Sin, and for Uncleanness.* Be thou as Leprous as that Syrian was of old, *2 King. 5. 18.* if thou canst but *Wash seven times in the Waters of this Jordan,* thou canst not but be clean; *Thy Flesh shall come again to thee, like to the Flesh of a little Child:* Thou shalt be at once sound and innocent. Be thou stung unto Death with the Fiery Serpents of this Wilderness; yet if thou canst but cast thine Eyes to that *Brazen Serpent* erected for thy Malady, thou canst not fail of Cure. Wherefore came *Christ* into the World, but to save Sinners? Add, if thou wilt, *Whereof I am Chief,* *1 Tim. 1. 15.* Thou canst say no worse by thy self, than a better Man did before thee; who, in the Right of a Sinner, claimeth the Benefit of a Saviour.

4. WERE it not for our Sins, what use were there of a Redeemer? Were not our Sins hainous, how should they have required such an Expiation, as the Blood of the Eternal Son of God?

God? The Greatness of thy Sins, serves but to magnifie the Mercy of the Forgiver: To remit the Debt of some few Farthings, were insignificant; but to forgive the Scores of thousands of Talents, is the height of Bounty. Thus doth *God* deal with thee: He hath suffer'd thee to run on in his Books to so deep a Sum, that when thy Conscious Heart hath proclaim'd thee Bankrupt, He may infinitely oblige thee, and glorifie his own Mercy, in crossing the Reckoning, and acquitting thy Soul. All Sums are equally dischargable to the Munificence of our Great Creditor in Heav'n: As it is the Act of his Justice, to call for the Least; so it is of his Mercy to forgive the Greatest. Had we to do with a Finite Power, we had reason to sink under the Burthen of our Sins: But having an infinite Power to attend us, let thy Care be to lay hold on that Infinite Mercy, which lies open to thee: And as thou art an Object fit for Mercy, in that thou art in thy self sinful, and miserable enough; so find thy self (as thou art) a Subject meet to receive this Mercy, as a Penitent Believer. Open and enlarge thy Bosom, to take in this Free Grace, and close with thy Blessed Saviour; and with, and in Him, possess thy self of Remission, Peace, and Salvation.

5. SWEET Words, thou say'st, to those that are capable of them: But what is all this to me, that am neither Penitent, nor Believer? Alas! That which is Honey to others, is no better than Gall or Wormwood to me; who have not the Grace to Repent, and Believe as I ought. Why wilt thou be so unwise and unjust,

just, as to take part with *Satan* against thine own Soul? Why wilt thou be so unthankfully injurious to the Father of Mercies, as to deny those Graces, which his good Spirit hath so freely bestowed upon thee? If thou wert not penitent for thy Sins, wherefore are these Tears? What mean these Sighs, and Sobs, and passionate Expressions of Sorrow, which I hear from thee? It is no Worldly Loss, that thus afflicts thee; it is no Bodily Distemper, that thus disquiets thee: Doubtless, thou art Soul-sick, thy Spirit is deeply wounded within thee; and what can thus affect thy Soul, but Sin? Or what can this Affection of thy Soul be for Sin, but true Penitence?

6. THOU say'st; I am indeed sorrowful for my Sin, but not upon the right Grounds: I grieve for the Misery that my Sin hath brought upon me, not for the Evil of my Sin; but for the Punishment, not the Offence; for my own Danger, not for the Displeasure of my good God. Beware, lest an undue Humility cause thee to belie the Graces of God's Spirit: Thou art no Competent Judge of thy self, whilst thou art under Temptations. Had not thy Sorrow a relation to thy God, why wouldst thou thus sigh towards Heav'n? Why would thy Heart challenge thee for unkindness in offending? And why dost thou cry out of the Foulness, not of the Peril, of thy Sin? What is it that makes the Act of thy Sin to be sinful, but the Offence against the Divine Majesty? How canst thou then be sorry that thou hast sinned, and not be sorry that thou hast offended? Tell me,
What

What is it that thy Conscience primarily suggests to thee in this deep Impression of thy Sorrow? Is it thou shalt be punish't? Or is it not rather, thou hast sinned? And were it put to thy Choice, Whether thou hadst rather enjoy the Favour of thy *God*, with Extremity of Pain, or be in his Displeasure with Ease? or if Liberty were tendred unto thee, that thou mightst freely sin without the danger of Punishment? Whether doth not thy Heart rise at the Condition, as ready to flie in the Face of the Offerer? Besides Fear and Horrour, dost thou not find an inward kind of Indignation at thy Miscarriage, and such an Hatred of thy Sin, that were it to be done again, if it were possible to be hid from *God* and Men, and if there were not an Hell to avenge it, wouldst thou not abhor to commit it? All these are strong Convictions of the right Grounds of thy Repentance, and of the Wrong which thou dost to thine own Soul, in the unjust Scruples which thou raisest against it.

7. IF the Grounds (thou say'st) of my Repentance be right, yet the Measure is insufficient: I am sorrowful for my Sins, but not enough: An effectual Grief for Sin should be serious, deep, hearty, intensive; mine is slight and superficial. I sigh, but my Sighs come not from the bottom of an humble Heart: I can sometimes weep, but I cannot pour out my self into Tears: I mourn, but I do not continue my Sorrow. To this I *Answer*: Thou hast to do with a *God*, which in all the Dispositions of our Soul, regards Truth, and not Quantity: If He
find

find thy Remorse sound, He stands not upon measure; He doth not mete out our Repentance by Inches, or by Hours; but where He finds Sincerity of Penitence, He is graciously Indulgent. Look upon *David*, and acknowledge his Sin formidably hainous; no less than *Adultery*, seconded with Inebriation and *Murder*: Yet no sooner did he in a true Compunction of Heart, cry *Peccavi, I have sinned against the Lord*; than he hears from the same Mouth that accused him, *The Lord also hath put away thy Sin, thou shalt not die*, 2 Sam. 12. 13. Here is a penitent Confession, which was efficacious in the Expiation of those grievous Crimes. Thou art deceived, if thou thinkest *God* delights in the Misery and Afflictedness of his Creatures: So far only is the Grief of his Dear Ones pleasing unto Him, that it may conduce to the Health of their Souls, in the due Sensibleness of their Sin, and meet Capacity of Mercy.

8. I do not, with some Casuists, flatter thee with an Opinion of the Sufficiency of any slight Attrition, and empty wishes that thou hadst not sinned; doubtless, a true Contrition of Spirit, and Compunction of Heart, are necessarily required to a saving Repentance: and these, wert thou but an indifferent Censurer of thine own ways, thou couldst not chuse but find within thy self. Why is thy Countenance so dejected, thy Cheeks pale and watered so oft with thy Tears, thy want of Rest, and the loss of thy Appetite? Wherefore dost thou pour out those sad Complaints, and vehement Deprecations? But after all this, be thou such as thou accusest

accusest thy self, defective in the measure of thy *Repentance*: Dost thou rest contented in this Condition? Dost thou not complain of it, as the greatest Misery? Art thou not heartily sorry, that thou canst be no more griev'd for thy Sin? Comfort thy self, even this alone is an acceptable Degree of *Repentance*; and God himself accepts of it. What is *Repentance*, but a change of Mind from Evil to Good? And how sensible is this Change, that thou who formerly delighted in thy Sin, now abhorrest it, and thy self for it; and art yet ambitious of more Grief, for being transported into it? Let not the Enemy of thy Soul, who desires nothing more than to make thee perfectly miserable, win so much of thee, as to render thee unsatisfied with the Measure of that Penitence, which is accepted of thy God: Rather turn thine Eyes from thy Sins, and look up to Heaven, and fasten 'em there upon thine All-sufficient Mediator at the Right Hand of Majesty; and behold his Face smiling upon thine humbled Soul, and perfectly reconciling thee to his Eternal Father; as being fully assured, *That being justified by Faith, we have Peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have Access by Faith into this Grace wherein we stand, and rejoyce in the Hope of the Glory of God*, Rom. 5. 1, 2.

9. THERE, thou say'st, is the very Core of all my Complaint: I want that *Faith*, that should give me an Interest in my Saviour, and afford true Comfort to my Soul; and *Boldness and Access with Confidence*, to the Throne of Grace; Ephes. 3. 12. I can be sorry, but I can-
not

not believe; my Grief is not so great, as my Infidelity: I see others full of *Joy and Peace in believing*, Rom. 15. 13. but my strong Heart cannot raise it self up to a comfortable Apprehension of my *Saviour*: So as, indeed, I dwell in a kind of obdurate Darkness, and a sad Ponderosity of Unbelief; wanting that lightsome Assurance, which others profess to find in themselves. Take heed, lest whil'st thou art too querulous, thou prove unthankful; and lest whil'st thine Humbleness disparages thy self, thou make *God* a Loser. A Man may have a rich Mine lying deep in his Ground, which he knows not of: And there are Shells inwardly furnished with Pearls of great Price, whose Worth many are not sensible of. This is thy Condition: Thou hast that Grace thou complaine'st to want; and there is no measuring of thy self by Sense, especially in the time of Temptation: Thou could'st not so sensibly lament the want of Faith, if thou had'st it not. Thou canst not deny thy Assent to the Truth of all *God's* Promises: Thou acknowledst He could not be what He is, if He were not even Truth it self: Thou canst not doubt, but He hath made those Promises of Grace and Mercy to all Penitent Sinners, which tend to their Salvation; and thou canst not but grant, thou art sinful enough to need Mercy, and sorrowful enough to desire, and receive it.

10. CANST thou but love thy self so well, that when thou seest a Pardon held forth to save thy self from Death, to stretch forth thy Hand, and take it? This Hand stretch-

D

ed

ed forth, is thy *Faith*, which takes Spiritual Hold of thy *Saviour*: As for that Assurance thou speak'st of, they are happy that can truly feel, and maintain it; and it must be our Holy Ambition, to be diligent in the Aspiration: but such an height of Perfection, every Traveller in this wretched Pilgrimage, cannot whilst he is in this perplexed, and heavy Rode, hope to attain to. It is an unsafe, and dangerous Path, which those Men] have walked in, who have used to define all Faith by Assurance: Should I lead thee that way, it might be prejudicial. So sure a Certainty of our constant and reflected Apprehension of Eternal Life, is both hard to get, and not easie to hold unmovably; considering the many and strong Temptations, that we are subject to in this Vale of Misery and Death. Should Faith be reduced to this Trial, it would be yet more rare than our *Saviour* hath foretold it: For as many one boasts of such an Assurance, who is yet failing of a true Faith, embracing a vain Presumption instead of it; so many a one also, hath true Faith in the Lord *Jesus*, who yet complains to want this Assurance. Canst thou in a Sense of thine own Misery, close with thy *Saviour*? Canst thou throw thy self into the Arms of his Mercy? Canst thou trust Him with thy Soul, and repose thy self upon Him for Forgiveness and Salvation? Canst thou lay thy self before Him, as a miserable Object of his Grace and Mercy? And when it is held forth to thee, canst thou lay some (though weak) hold upon it? Labour what thou canst, for further Degrees of Strength daily: Set not
up

up thy Rest in this Pitch of Grace; but chear up thy self, even thus much Faith shall save thy Soul. Thou believest; and He hath said it, that is Truth it self: *He that believeth on the Son, hath Everlasting Life*, Joh. 3. 36.

11. I know, thou say'st, that *Jesus Christ* came into the World to save Sinners; and that *Who-soever believeth in Him, shall not perish, but have Eternal Life*, Joh. 3. 15. Neither can I deny, but that in a Sense of my own sinful Condition, I do cast my self in some mesure upon my *Saviour*, and lay some Hold upon his All-sufficient Redemption: But, Alas! my Apprehensions of Him are so Weak, that they can afford no Comfort to my Soul. Were it that thou lookest to be justified, and saved by the Power, and very Act of thy Faith, thou hadst reason to be dis-heartned with the Conscience of the weakness of it: but now, that the Vertue and Efficacy of this happy Work is in the Object apprehended by thee, which is the infinite Merits and Mercy of thy *God* and *Saviour*, that cannot be abated by thine Infirmities, thou hast cause to take Heart to thy self, and chearfully to expect thy Salvation. Understand thy Case aright: Here's a double Hand, that helps thee up towards Heav'n; Thy Hand of Faith lays hold upon thy *Saviour*; thy *Saviour's* Hand of Mercy, and plenteous Redemption, lays hold on thee: Thy Hold of Him is feeble, and easily losed; His Hold of thee is strong, and irresistible. Comfort thy self therefore, in this, with the blessed Apostle; when thou art *Weak*, then thou art *Strong*; when weak in thy Self, strong in thy

Redeemer. Shouldst thou boast of thy Strength, and say, Tush, I shall never be moved ; I should suspect the Verity and Safety of thy Condition : Now thou bewailest thy Weakness, I cannot but Encourage and Congratulate the happy Estate of thy Soul. If a greater Work were expedient, a Strength of Hand were necessary : But now, that only taking and receiving of a precious Gift is required, why may not a weak Hand do that as well as a strong, though not as forcibly ? Be not therefore dejected with the want of thine own Power, but comfort thy self in the Rich Mercies of thy Blessed Redeemer.

12. THOU expressest ; Sometimes, I confess, I find my Heart at ease, in a comfortable Reliance on my *Saviour* ; and being well resolv'd of the Safety of my State, promise good Days to my self ; and after the Banishment of my former Fears, dare bid defiance to Temptations : But, Alas ! how soon is this fair Weather over ? How suddenly is this clear Skie clouded, spread over with a sad Darkness, and I return to my former Despondency ? Did'st thou conceive, that Grace would put thee into a constant, and perpetual invariable Condition of Soul, whil'st thou art on this side Heav'n ? Did'st thou ever hear or read of any of *God's* Prime Saints upon Earth, that were unchangeable in their Holy Dispositions, whil'st they continued in this Region of Mutability ? Behold the Man after *God's* own Heart, thou shalt find him sometimes so couragious, as if the Spirits of all his Worthies were met in his own Bosom ; How resolutely doth he blow off all

Dan-

Dangers, trample on his Enemies, and triumph over all cross Events? Another while thou shalt find him so dejected, and chang'd from what he was: When chearful; *The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall lack nothing*, Psal. 23. 1. In Affliction; *Why art thou so sad, my Soul, and why art thou so disquieted within me?* Psal. 42. 14. In Fortitude; *I will not be afraid for ten thousands of People, that have set themselves against me round about*, Psal. 3. 6. In Trouble; *Hide me under the Shadow of thy Wings, from the Wicked that oppress me; from my deadly Enemies, who compass me about*, Psal. 17. 84. On his Integrity; *Thy loving Kindness is before mine Eyes, and I have walked in thy Truth*, Psal. 26. 3. In contrary Events; *Lord, where are thy loving Kindnesses?* Psal. 89. 49. And dost thou not hear him with one Breath professing his Confidence, and lamenting his Dissertion? *Lord, by thy Favour thou hast made my Mountain to stand strong: Thou did'st hide thy Face, and I was troubled*, Psal. 30. 7. Look upon the chosen Vessel, the great Apostle of the Gentiles; Sometimes thou shalt see him erecting Trophies in himself of Victory to his God: *In all these things we are more than Conquerours, through him that loved us*, Rom. 8. 37. On the contrary, thou shalt find him lamenting his own sinful Condition; *Oh, wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death!* Rom. 7. 24. In a holy Rapture, thou shalt find him caught up into the Third Heaven, and in the Paradise of God: And by Permission of the Almighty, thou shalt find him buffeted by the Messengers of Satan, and uttering Complaints to God of the Violence of that Assault. Hear the

Spouse of *Christ* bemoaning her self; *I opened to my Beloved, but my Beloved had with-drawn himself, and was gone: My Soul failed, when he spake. I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he made me no Answer, Cant. 5. 6.* Thus will it be with thee, whilst thou art in this Carnality: The Temper of thy Soul will be, like her Partner, subject to Vicissitudes. Should'st thou continue always in the same State, I should more than suspect thee. This is the difference betwixt Nature and Grace; the One is still uniform, and like it self; the Other varies according to the pleasure of the Giver: *The Spirit breaths when, and where it listeth, Joh. 3. 8.* When therefore thou find'st the gracious Inspirations of the Holy Ghost within thee, be thankful to the Infinite Munificence of that Blessed Spirit: and still pray; *Arise, O North, and come thou South Wind, that the Spices thereof may flow out, Cant. 4. 16.* But when thou shalt find thy Soul becalm'd, and not a Leaf stirring in its Garden, be not too much dejected with an ungrounded Opinion of being destituted of thy God; neither do thou repine at the Seasons, or Measures of his Bounty: That most free and beneficent Agent, will not be tyed to our Terms; but will give us what he sees necessary: Therefore humbly wait upon his Goodness; and be confident, that he who hath begun his good Work in thee, will perform it until the Day of Jesus Christ, Phil. 1. 6.

13. IT is true, (thou say'st) if God had began the Operation, He would at the last, for his own Glories sake, finish it: But for
me,

me, I am a Man dead in Trespases and Sins ; neither ever had I any true Contrition in me: Some Shew, indeed, I have made of a Christian Profession ; but I have only deceived the Eye of the World with a fallacious Pretence ; and have not found in my self the Truth, and Solidity of those Heavenly Vertues, whereof I have made a formal Ostentation. It were pity, thou shouldst be so bad as thou mak'st thy self: I have no tender Compassion in store for Hypocrisie ; nor no Disposition is more odious to the Almighty ; insomuch, as when He would express his utmost Vengeance against Sinners, He hath no more terms of Terrour to set it forth, than *I will appoint him his Portion with the Hypocrites,* Matth. 24. 51. Were it thus with thee, it were more than high time to work thy Repentance in Dust and Ashes ; and resign thy self into the Hands of his Almighty Protection, to be created anew by his Powerful Spirit ; and never to give thy self Peace, till thou findest thy self *Renewed in the Spirit of thy Mind,* Eph. 4. 23. But, in the mean while, take heed lest thou be found guilty of mis-judging thine own Soul ; and misprising the Operation of God's Spirit in thee: God hath been better to thee, than thou wilt acknowledge: Thou hast a true Sense of Grace in thee, and for the time perceiv'st it not. There is no notice to be taken of the Sentence thou passest upon thy self, in the hour of Temptation : When thy Heart was free, thou wert in another Mind ; and shalt, upon better Advice, return to thy former Thoughts.

14. IT is with thee, as it was with *Eury-*
D 4
chus,

thus, that fell down from the third Story, and was taken up for Dead, when his Life remained in him. We have known those, who have lain long in Trances, without any perception of Life; yea, some (as that subtil *Johannes Duns Scotus*) have been laid in their Graves for dead, before their Souls hath taken leave of their Bodies, though unable to exert those Faculties, which might evince her hidden Presence. Such thou may'st be at the worst; and wert thou but in Charity with thy self, thou wouldst be found in a much better Condition. There is the same reason of the Natural Life, and the Spiritual: Where it is discern'd by Breathing, Sense, and Motion; where there is a breathing Motion, there must be a Life that sends it forth: If then the Soul breaths forth Holy Desires, doubtless there is a Life whence they proceed. Now deny, if thou can'st, that thou hast these Spiritual Breathings of Holy Desires within thee? Do'st thou not many a time sigh for thine own Insensateness? Is not thine Heart troubled with the Thoughts of thy Spiritual Wants? Do'st thou not truly desire, that *God would Renew a right Spirit within thee?* Take Courage to thy self: This is the Work of the inward Principle of *God's Spirit*: As well may a Man breathe without Life, as thou could'st be thus affected without Repentance. Sense is a quick Descrier of Life: Pinch or wound a dead Man, he is not sensible; but the Living perceiveth the easiest Touch. When thou hast heard the fearful Judgments of *God* denounced against Sinners, and laid home to the Conscience;

ence ; Hast thou not found thy Heart pierced with them ? Hast thou not shrunk inward, and secretly thought, how shall I decline this dreadful Damnation ? When thou hast heard the tender Mercies of *God* laid forth to Penitent Sinners, hath not thine Heart silently said, Oh that I had my Share in them ! When thou hast heard the Name of *God* blasphem'd, hast thou not felt a secret Horror in thy Bosom ? All these argue a true Spiritual Life within thee.

15. MOTION is the most perfectest Discoverer of Life : he that can stir his Limbs, is surely not dead. The Feet of the Soul, are the Affections : Hast thou not found in thy self an Hate and Detestation of that Sin, wherein thou hast been miscarried ? Hast thou not discover'd in thy self a true Grief of Heart for thy wretched Indisposition to all good things ? Hast thou not found in thy self a secret Love to, and Complacency in those whom thou hast thought truly Religious and Conscionable ? Without a Life of Repentance, these things could never have been. Are not thine Eyes and Hands many times lifted up in an Imploration of Mercy ? Canst thou deny, that thou hast a real, though but weak Appetite to the Means, and further Degrees of it ? What can this be, but that *Hunger and Thirst after Righteousness*, to which our *Saviour* hath pronounc'd Blessedness ? *Matth. 5. 6.* Discomfort not thy self too much, with the present disappearance of *God's* Spirit : During the Hour of thy Temptation, it is no otherwise with thee, than with a Tree in Winter, whose Sap is run down to the Root ; where there

there is no Appearance of the Life of Vegetation, by any Buds or Blossoms shooting forth then; but appears, as it were, motionless: yet when the Sun returns, and sends forth his comfortable Beams in the Spring, it sprouts forth afresh, and bewrays that Vital Juice, which lay long hidden in the Earth: So thou must with *Patience* wait, till the Spring, when the Son of Righteousness shall arise with Healing in his Wings, and call up thy Moisture into thy Branches; that that Grace may spring forth in thee, which is able to save thy Soul: then thou shalt find cause to say of thine Heart, as *Jacob* said of his hard Lodging; *Surely, the Lord is in this Place, and I knew it not*, Gen. 28.

16. Only do thou, not neglecting the Means, wait patiently *God's* Leasure; stay quietly upon the Bank of this *Bethesda*, till the *Angel* descend, and move the Water.

16. I could gladly, thou say'st, attend with *Patience* upon *God*, in this great and happy Work of the Excitation of Grace, were I but sure I had it; or could be but perswaded of the Verity of my Conversion: But it is my great misery, that here I am at a sad and uncomfortable Loss; for I have been inform'd, that every true Convert can design the Time, Place, Means, and Manner of his Conversion; and can shew how near he was brought to the Gates of Death, how close to the very Verge of Hell; when *God*, by a mighty and out-stretched Arm, snatcht him away, in his own sensible Apprehension, from the Pit of *Perdition*, and suddenly rescu'd him from everlasting Damnation; placing him in a new State
of

of Spiritual Life, and Eternal Salvation: All which I cannot attain to; not finding in my self any such sudden and vehement Concussion, hearty Contrition, or any such forcible and irresistible Operation of *God's* Spirit in me, nor can I put in practice the Sermon design'd for my Conversion, or those particular Approaches that my Soul made towards an hardly-recovered Desperation.

To which I answer: It is not safe for any Man to take upon him to set Limits to the Ways of the Almighty; or to prescribe certain Rules to the Proceedings of that Infinite Wisdom: that most free, and All-wise Agent, will not be tyed to walk always in one Path; but varies his Courses according to the Pleasure of his Divine Will. One Man He calls suddenly, as He did *St. Paul*; another by sweet Solicitations, as *Philip, Nathanael, Andrew, Peter, Matthew*, and the rest of the Apostles. One Man He draws to Heav'n with gracious Invitations; another He drives thither with a strong Hand. We have known those, who having mispent their Time in their Juvenile Years, in notoriously lewd and debauch'd Courses, living as without *God*, nay, against Him have been heart-stricken with some powerful Denunciation of Judgment; which hath so wrought upon 'em, that it hath brought them within sight of Hell: who after long and deep Humiliation, have been raised up through *God's* Mercy, to a Comfortable Sense of the Divine Favour, and have proceeded to a very high degree of Regeneration, and liv'd and dy'd good Christians.

17. BUT

17. BUT this is not every ones Case ; those who have from their Infancy been brought up in *The Nurture and Fear of the Lord*, Ephes. 6. 4. and from their Youth have been train'd up under a Godly, and Conscionable Ministry ; where they have been continually plyed with the effectual Means of Grace : *Precept upon Precept, Line upon Line ; here a little, and there a little*, Isa. 28. 10. and have by an insensible Conveyance, receiv'd the Gracious Inoperations of the Spirit of God, though not without many inward Debates, Temptations, and sad Fits of Humiliation, for their particular Failings, framing them to all Holy Obedience : These cannot expect to find so sensible Alterations in themselves : As well may the Child know when he was naturally Born, as These may know the instant of their Spiritual Regeneration ; and as well may they see the Grass grow, as they can perceive their insensible Increase of Grace : It is enough that the Child, attaining to the use of Reason, now knows he was Born ; and when we see the Grass higher than we left it, know that it is grown. Let it then suffice thee, to know that the thing is finish'd, though thou canst not define the time, and manner of doing it : Be not over curious in matters of particular Preceptions, whil'st thou may'st be assur'd of the Reality of what is wrought in thee. Thou seest the Skilful Chyrurgion, when he makes a Fontinel in the Body of his Patient, he can do it either by a sudden Incision, or by a leisurely Corrosive ; both comes to one End, and equally tend towards Health.

Trust

Trust God with thy self, and let Him alone with his own Work; without making inquiry, which way he thinks best to bring about thy Salvation?

18. ALL were safe, thou say'st, if only I could be ascertain'd of mine Election to Life Eternal; I could be *patient*, so I might be sure: But, wretched Man that I am, here I am plung'd: I see others walk comfortably, as if they were in Heav'n already; whereas I droop under a continual Diffidence; raising unto my self daily new Arguments of my Distrust. Could my Heart be settled in this Assurance, nothing could make me otherwise than Happy.

It is true, that as all other Mercies flow from this of our Election; so the securing of this one, involves all other Favours that concern the well being of our Souls. It is no less true, that our Election may be assured; else the Holy Ghost had never laid so deep a Charge upon us, to do our utmost Endeavour to ascertain it: And we shall be much wanting to our selves, if hearing so excellent a Blessing may be attained by our Diligence, if we pull not our Hand out of our Bosom, to reach that Crown which is offer'd to us: But withal, 'tis true, that if there were not a difficulty more than ordinary in this Work, the Apostle had not so earnestly call'd for the utmost of our Endeavour to effect it; 2 Pet. i. 10.

19. THE Truth is, in all Christianity there is no Path, wherein there is more need of treading warily, than this: On each side is Danger
and

and Death ; Security lies on the one hand, Presumption on the other : and the Miscarriage either way, is deadly. Look about thee, and see the miserable Examples on both kinds : Some walk carelessly, as if there were no Heav'n ; or if there were such a Place, yet as if it were to them of no Concernment : Their Hearts are taken up with the Pleasures of this Life ; and they neither care, nor wish to be Happier, than this World can make 'em : *The God of this World hath blinded their Eyes, that they believe not,* 2 Cor. 4. 4. Others walk proudly, being vainly pufft up with their own ungrounded Imaginations, as if they were already invested with Immortal Glory ; fancying themselves rapt up with the Chosen Vessel into the Third Heav'n, they have there seen their Names recorded in the Book of Life : whereas this is nothing but an Illusion of that Lying Spirit ; who knows the way to keep 'em for ever out of Heaven, is to make 'em believe they are in a State of Happiness.

20. IT must be thy main Care to walk even, in a just Equidistance from both these Extreames ; and to compose thy self, that thou may'st be resolute without Presumption, and careful without Diffidence. And, *First*, I advise thee to abandon those False Teachers, whose Trade is to improve their Wits for the Ruine of Souls, in broaching the sad Doctrines of Uncertainty and Distrust. Be sure, our *Saviour* had never bid his Disciples to rejoyce, that their *Names are written in Heav'n*, Luk. 10. 20. if there had not been a particular Enrollment
of

of them ; or if that Record had been alterable ; that the same Disciples could never have attained to the notice of such Inscription. Neither is this a Mercy peculiar to his Domestick Followers alone ; but universal to all that shall believe what they testifie ; and by believing we may be assur'd our Names are Registred in those Eternal Records.

21. NOT that we should take an *Acesus* his Ladder, and climb up into Heav'n, and turn over the Book of *God's* secret Counsels, and read our selves design'd to Glory : But that, as we by Experience see, that we can by Reflections see and read those Letters, which directly we cannot : So we may do here, in this highest of Spiritual Objects. The same Apostle that gives us our Charge, gives us withal our Directions : *Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give all Diligence to make your Callings, and Election sure ; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall : for so an Entrance shall be ministred unto you abundantly, into the Everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. 1. 10, 11.* Here is first our Calling, then our Election ; not that we should begin with Heav'n, and thence descend to the Earth ; (It is enough for the Angels, on that Celestial Ladder of *Jacob's*, to both descend and ascend to Heav'n) but that we should from Earth ascend to Heav'n ; from our Calling, to our Election : As knowing, that *God* shews what He hath done for us above, by that which He hath wrought in us here below.

22. OUR

22. OUR Calling therefore first; not outward, and formal; but inward, and effectual. The Spirit of God hath a Voice, and our Soul hath an Ear; that Voice of the Spirit speaks inwardly, and effectually to the Ear of the Soul; calling us out of the State of Corrupt Nature, into the State of Grace; out of Darknes, into his Marvellous Light. By thy Calling therefore, thou may'st judge of thine Election: God never works in vain, neither doth He ever cast away his saving Graces: but *Whom he did Predestinate, them also he Called; and whom he Called, them he Justified; and whom he Justified, them also he Glorified*, Rom. 8. 30. This doubtless, thou say'st, is sure in it self; but how is it assured to me? I answer: That which the Apostle adds, *by Good Works*, if therein we comprehend the Acts of Believing and Repenting, is a special Evidence of our Election. But not to urge that Clause of *Good Works*, which (though read in the Vulgar) is found wanting in our Editions; the clear Words of the Text evince no less: *For, if ye do these things, ye shall never fall*: Here is our Negative Certainty: and for our Positive; *So an Entrance shall be ministred unto you abundantly, into the Everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*. If we shall never fall, but shall undoubtedly enter into the Kingdom of Christ; What possible Scruple can be made of the blessed Accomplishment of our Election? What then are these things, that must be done by us? Cast your Eyes upon that Collection of Graces, which you will find in the following

ing Words: If you *Add to your Faith, Vertue; and to Vertue, Knowledge; and to Knowledge, Temperance; and to Temperance, Patience; and to Patience, Godliness; and to Godliness, Brotherly Kindness; and to Brotherly Kindness, Charity,* 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6.

23. IF thou would'st be inform'd what God hath written concerning thee in Heaven, look into thy own Bosom, and see what Graces he hath there wrought in thee. *Truth of Grace, saith the Divine Apostle, will make good the Certainty of your Election.* Not to instance in the rest of that Heavenly Combination; do but single out the first and the last, Faith and Charity: for Faith, how clear is that of our Saviour; *He that believeth in him that sent me, hath Everlasting Life, and shall not come into Condemnation; but hath passed from Death to Life,* Joh. 5. 24. What danger can we be in then, in our acquiring Heav'n? All the Peril is in the way. Now the Believer is already passed into Life: This is the Grace, by which *Christ dwells in our Hearts,* Ephes. 3. 17. and whereby we have Communion with *Christ,* and an assured Testimony of, and from Him: *For he that believeth in the Son of God, hath the Witness in himself: And what Witness is that? This is the Record, that God hath given us Eternal Life: and this Life is in his Son; he that hath the Son, hath Life,* 1 Joh. 5. 10, 11, 12. Oh happy Connexion! Eternal Life first: This Life Eternal is in, and by *Christ Jesus;* this *Jesus* is ours by Faith, and this Faith witnesseth to our Souls Assurance of

E

Life

Life Eternal : Charity is the last, which comprehends our Love both to *God* and Man : For from the Reflection of *God's* Love to us, there ariseth a Love from us to Him again. The beloved Disciple can say ; *We love him, because he loved us first*, 1 Joh. 4. 19. And from both these, resulteth our Love to our Brethren : And so full an Evidence we have, that the Apostle tells us expressly, *That we know we are passed from Death to Life, because we love the Brethren*, 1 John 3. 14 : For the Love of the Father is inseparable from the Love of the Son : *He that loveth him that begets, loves him that is begotten of him*, 1 Joh. 5. 1.

24. NOW then, deal impartially with thine own Heart ; ask of it seriously, as in the Presence of the Searcher of all Hearts, Whether thou do'st not find in thy self these unfailing Evidences of thine Election ? Art thou not effectually, though not perfectly called out of the World, and Corrupt Nature ? Do'st thou not inwardly abhor thy former sinful ways ? And do'st thou not think of what thou wert with Detestation ? Do'st thou not heartily desire and endeavour to be in all things approved to *God*, and confirmed to thy *Saviour* ? Do'st thou not gladly cast thy self upon the Lord *Jesus*, and depend upon his free All-sufficiency for Pardon and Salvation ? Do'st thou not love that Infinite Goodness, who hath been so rich in Mercies to thee ? And do'st thou not love and bless those Beams of Goodness, which He hath cast upon his Saints on Earth ? In plain terms,
Do'st

Do'st thou not love a good Man, because he is so? Comfort thy self in the *Lord*; Let no fainting Qualms of Fear and Distrust possess thy Soul: *Faithful is He that hath called thee,* 1 Thess. 5. 24. who will also *Preserve thy whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,* 1 Thess. 5. 23.

E 2 SECT.

Life Eternal : Charity is the last, which comprehends our Love both to *God* and Man : For from the Reflection of *God's* Love to us, there ariseth a Love from us to Him again. The beloved Disciple can say ; *We love him, because he loved us first*, 1 Joh. 4. 19. And from both these, resulteth our Love to our Brethren : And so full an Evidence we have, that the Apostle tells us expressly, *That we know we are passed from Death to Life, because we love the Brethren*, 1 John 3. 14 : For the Love of the Father is inseparable from the Love of the Son : *He that loveth him that begets, loves him that is begotten of him*, 1 Joh. 5. 1.

24. NOW then, deal impartially with thine own Heart ; ask of it seriously, as in the Presence of the Searcher of all Hearts, Whether thou do'st not find in thy self these unfailing Evidences of thine Election ? Art thou not effectually, though not perfectly called out of the World, and Corrupt Nature ? Do'st thou not inwardly abhor thy former sinful ways ? And do'st thou not think of what thou wert with Detestation ? Do'st thou not heartily desire and endeavour to be in all things approved to *God*, and confirmed to thy *Saviour* ? Do'st thou not gladly cast thy self upon the Lord *Jesus*, and depend upon his free All-sufficiency for Pardon and Salvation ? Do'st thou not love that Infinite Goodness, who hath been so rich in Mercies to thee ? And do'st thou not love and bless those Beams of Goodness, which He hath cast upon his Saints on Earth ? In plain terms,
Do'st

Do'st thou not love a good Man, because he is so? Comfort thy self in the *Lord*; Let no fainting Qualms of Fear and Distrust possess thy Soul: *Faithful is He that hath called thee,* 1 Thess. 5. 24. who will also *Preserve thy whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,* 1 Thess. 5. 23.

SECT. II.

S E C T. IV.

Remedies against Temptations.

1. **T**HOU art assaulted with Temptations: That which the Enemy sees he cannot do by Force or Fraud, he seeks to effect by Importunity. Can this seem strange to thee, when thou seest the Son of God in the Wilderness forty Days, and forty Nights, under the Hand of the Tempter? He that durst set upon the *Captain of our Salvation*, Heb. 2. 10. God blessed for ever; How shall he spare frail Flesh and Blood? Why should that *Saviour* of thine, think'st thou, suffer himself to be tempted, if not to bear thee out in all thy Temptations? The Keys of the Bottomless Pit are in his Hands: He could have shut up that Presumptuous Spirit under Chains of Darkness, so as he could have come no nearer to Him than Hell; but He would let him loose, and permit him to do his worst; purposely that we might not think much to be tempted, and that He might foil that great Enemy for us.

2. **CANST** thou think that He, who now sits at the Right Hand of Majesty, commanding all the Powers of Heav'n, Earth, and Hell, could not easily keep off that malignant Spirit from assailing

assailing thee? Canst thou think Him less Merciful, than Mighty? Would He die to save thee? and will He turn that Miscreant of Hell loose upon thee, to worry thee? Do'st thou not pray daily to thy Father in Heav'n, that He would not *Lead thee into Temptation*? If thou know'st thou hast to do with a *God* that heareth Prayers; Oh thou of little Faith, why fearest thou? He that was led by his own Divine Spirit into the Wilderness, to be tempted of that Evil Spirit, bids thee pray to the Father, that He would not *Lead thee into Temptation*; as implying, that thou could'st not go into Temptation, unless He led thee; and whil'st He that is thy Father leads thee, how canst thou miscarry? *Let no Man when he is tempted, say, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with Evil, neither tempteth he any Man, Jam. i. 13.* God tempteth thee not; yet know, that being His, thou could'st not be tempted without Him, both permitting, and ordering that Temptation to his own Glory, and thy Eternal Good.

3. THAT Grace which thy *God* hath given thee, He will have thus exercised, and manifested: How had we known the admirable Continency of good *Joseph*, if he had not been strongly solicited by a Wanton Mistress? How had we known *David's* Valour, if the *Philistines* had not had a Giantly Challenger, to encounter him? How had we known the Invincible Piety of the *Three Children*, if there had not been a *Furnace* to try them? Or of *Daniel*, if there had been no *Lyons* to accompany him?

Be confident, thy Glory shall be according to the Proportion of thy Tryal: Neither could'st thou ever be so happy, if thou had'st not been beholden to Temptations. How often, thou say'st, have I beaten off these wicked Suggestions; yet still they retort upon me again, as if Denials invited 'em; as tho' they meant to tire me with their continual Solicitations; as if I must yield, and be over-pow'rd, though not with their Force, yet with their Frequency?

4- KNOW, that thou hast to do with *Spiritual Wickednesses*, Ephes. 6. 12. whose Nature is therefore as unwearable, as their Malice unsatisfiable: Thou hast a Spirit of thine own; and besides, God hath given thee of His: so as He expects thou should'st, through the Pow'r of his Gracious Assistance, match the Importunity of that Evil Spirit, with an indefatigable Resistance. *Be strong therefore in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might; and put on the whole Armour of God, that thou may'st be able to withstand in the Evil Day; and having done all, to stand,* Ephes. 6. 10, 11, 13. Look upon a stronger Champion than thy self, the blessed *Apostle*; thou shalt find him in thy own Condition; see *the Messenger of Satan sent to buffet him*, 2 Cor. 12. 7. and he did it to purpose: With what extream Rigour was he buffeted on both sides, and how often? *Thrice he besought the Lord, that it might depart from him*, Vers. 8. but even yet it would not be, the Temptation holds; only a Comfort shall countervail it: *My Grace is sufficient for thee, for my Grace is made perfect in Weakness*, Ver. 9.

5. IT is not so much to be consider'd, how hard thou art aim'd at, as how strongly thou art upheld: How many with the Blessed Martyr *Theodorus*, have upon *Racks* and *Gibbets* found their Courage stronger than their Pains? Whil'st therefore the Goodness of thy God sustains, and supplies thee with abundance of Spiritual Vigour, and Refreshment answerable to the worst of thine Assaults, what cause hast thou to complain of Suffering? The Advice is high and heroical, which the Apostle St. *James*, gives to his Compatriots; *My Brethren, count it all Joy, when ye fall into divers Temptations.* Let those Temptations be rather Trials by Afflictions, than Suggestions of Sin; yet even those overcome, yield no small cause of Tryumph: for by them is our Faith no less tried; and the trying of our Faith worketh *Patience*; and the perfect Work of *Patience*, is a blessed Entireness. The number of Enemies adds to the Praise of the Victory: to overcome a single Temptation, is commendable; but to subdue Multitudes of 'em, is glorious.

6. ALAS, thou say'st, I am oppress'd, not with Multiplicity only, but with Pow'r: In all Challenges of *Duels*, there is wont to be respect had to the Equality both of the Combatants and Weapons: But, woe is me, how am I overmatch'd! As for me, I am a weak Wretch; and *We wrestle not against Flesh and Blood; but against Principalities and Powers; against the Rulers of the Darknes of this World, against Spiritual Wickedness in Heavenly Places,* Ephes. 6. 12. Behold the Amorite, whose height is like the height of the

Cedars, and their Strength as the Strength of Oaks, Amos 2. 9. What are we but poor Pismires in the Valley, to these Men of Measures? Who can stand before these Sons of *Anak*? I did not advise thee, to be strong in thy self; we are all made up of Weakness: One of those Pow'rs of Darkness were able to subdue a whole World of Men: But to be *Strong in the Lord*; whose lowest Angel is able to vanquish a whole Hell of Devils: and, in the Pow'r of his Might, commandeth the most furious of those infernal Spirits to their Chains. What a Condition should we be in, if left to our selves; there were no way for us, but Circumvention and Death: But, *Our Help is in the Name of the Lord, who hath made Heaven and Earth*, Psal. 124. 8. *The Lord is our Strength, and our Shield*, Psal. 28. 7. *He is our Rock, and our Salvation; He is our Defence, so as we shall not be moved*, Psal. 62. 2, 6. *It is He that hath girded us with Strength unto Battle, and that subdueth those that rise up against us*, Psal. 18. 39.

7. TAKE Courage therefore to thy self; there cannot be so much difference betwixt thee, and those Hellish Pow'rs, as there is betwixt them, and the Almighty: Their Force is finite, and limited by his Omnipotence. How fain, dost thou think, *Jannes and Jambres*, the great Magicians of *Egypt*, by the conjoyn'd Pow'rs of Hell, would have made but a Louse, in affront to *Moses*? but could not. How earnestly was that Legion of Devils fain to beg but for Leave to prevail over a few *Gaderene-Swine*? How strong therefore soever they seem to thee, yet to Him they are so weak, that they

they cannot so much as move without Him. Who fears a *Bear*, or a *Lion*, when they are chain'd to the Stake? Even Children can behold them baited, when they see their Restraint. Look not upon thy self therefore; nor upon them; but look up to that over-ruling Hand of Providence of the Almighty, who ordaines all their Motions to his own holy Purposes; and even out of their Malice, raises Glory to himself, and Advantage to his Servants.

8. IT is a sad Advantage, (thou say'st) that I have made of Temptations: For, Alas! I have been shamefully foil'd by 'em; what by their Subtilty, and what by their Violence, have been miscarried into a grievous Sin against my *God*, and lie down in a just Confusion of Face, to have been so miserably vanquished. Had'st thou wanted Tears for thine Offences, I should willingly have lent thee some. But it is indeed a deplorable Case, that thou hast given thy deadly Enemy this cause to triumph over thee; and hast thus provoked thy *God*: Be thou thoroughly humbled under the Guilt of thy Sin, and be not too hasty in snatching a Pardon out of the Hand which thou hast offended: Be humbled; but after thou hast made thy Peace with *God*, by a serious Repentance, be not dis-heartned with thy Failings: neither do I fear to tell thee of an Advantage to be made, not of thy Temptations only, but even of thy Sin.

9. ART not thou a Gainer, if after this thy falling down, thou do'st in a Holy Indignation,

nation rise up, and fight the more valiantly? A Wound received, doth but whet the Edge of true Fortitude: Many a one had not been Victorious, if he had not seen himself bleed first. Look where thou wilt, upon all the Saints of God; mark if thou canst see any of them without his Scars: Many fearful Gashes we have seen of the Noblest of God's Champions upon Earth, whose Courage had never been raised to so high a Pitch, had it not been out of the Sense of some former Discomfortures! As some well-spirited Wrestler, therefore, be not so much troubled with thy Fall, as zealous to repay it with a more successful Encounter. *We know, saith the blessed Apostle, that all things work together for good to them that love God, Rom. 8. 28.* All things; yea, even those that are worse than nothing, their very Sins. The *Corinthians* offended in their silent Connivance at the Incestuous Person: the Apostles Reproof produc'd their Sorrow: What was the Issue? *For behold, this self-same thing that ye sorrowed after a Godly sort, what Carefulness is wrought in you? yea, what clearing of your selves; yea, what Indignation; yea, what Fear; yea, what vehement Desire; yea, what Zeal; yea, what Revenge? 2 Cor. 7. 11.* What a marvellous Advantage is here made of one Offence? And what hath Satan gain'd by this Encounter? One poor *Corinthian* is misled to an incestuous Copulation: The Evil Spirit rejoyceth to have got such a Prey; but how long shall he enjoy it? Soon after the offending Soul, upon the *Apostles* holy Censure, is reclaim'd; he is deliver'd over to Satan, that

that Satan should never possess him.

10. THE *Corinthians* are raised to a greater height of Godly Zeal, than ever. *Corinth* had never been so rich in Grace, if it had not been defiled with so foul a Crime. Confess now, whether this be not in effect thy Case? Shouldst thou ever have so much hated thy Sin, if thou had'st not been drawn in, to commit it? Should'st thou have found in thy self so fervent a Love to thy *God*, if it had not been out of the Sense of his great Mercy, in remitting it? Would'st thou have been so wary in thy Stops, as now thou art, if thou had'st never slipped? Give Glory to *God*, whilst thou givest Shame to thy self; and bless Him for the Benefit that He hath been pleased to make of thine offending Him.

11. BUT Alas! thou say'st, my Case is far worse, than it is conceiv'd; I have been more than once miscarried into the same Sin: For after I have made Profession of my Repentance, I have been transported into my former Wick- edness: Having wash't off my Sin (as I thought) with my many Tears; yet I have suffer'd my Soul to be defiled with it again. I must not flatter thee; this Condition is dangerous: Those Diseases, which upon their first Seizure have without any great Peril of the *Patient* receiv'd Cure, after a Recidivation have threatned Death. Look upon the Saints of *God*, thou shalt find they have kept a distance from that Fire where-with they have been formerly burnt: thou shalt not find *Noah* again uncovered, through Drunkenness, in his Tent; nor *Judah* climbing

climbing up to *Tamer's* Bed : Thou shalt not take *Peter* again in the High - Priests Hall, denying his Master ; or after *St. Paul's* Re-proof, *Halting in his Dissimulation*, Gallat. 2. 11, 12, 13.

12. BUT tell me, notwithstanding, Art thou truly serious with thy *God* ? Hast thou doubled thy Humiliation, for the Reduplication of thine Offence ? Hast thou sought *God* so much the more instantly, with an unfeign'd Contrition of Heart ? Hast thou found thy Soul hath wrought a greater detestation of thy Sin, than thine Acquaintance with it hath indulg'd thee ? Hast thou taken this occasion, to lay better Hold on thy *Saviour*, and to re-inforce the Vows of thy more careful, and strict Obedience ? If thou hast, this unpurpos'd Reiteration of thy Sin, shall be no Prejudice to thy Salvation. It is one thing for a Man to walk on willingly, in a beaten Path of Sin ; another thing for him to be just led out of the way of Righteousness, by the violence of a Temptation, which he soon recovers again by a sincere Repentance.

13. THE Best cannot but be over-taken with Sin : but, *He that is born of God, doth not commit Sin*, 1 Joh. 3. 9. He may be transported whether he meant not ; but he makes not a Custom of doing ill : His Heart is against that, which his Hand is drawn to : and if in this inward Strife he be over-power'd, he lies not down with a willing Mind ; but struggles up again, and in a re-assumed Courage and Indignation, tramples on that which formerly supplanted

planted him. Did'st thou give thy self over to a resolved Course of sinning, and betwixt whiles should knock thy Brest with a formal, *God forgive me*, I should have no Comfort in store for thee; but rather send thee to some Afflictious Remedy of the *Almighty*, for due Correction; if possibly those seasonable Stripes may prevent thine Everlasting Torments.

14. BUT now, since *What thou hatest, that thou do'st; and thou do'st that, which thou wouldst not; and it is no more thou that do'st it, but Sin that dwells in thee*, Rom. 7. 19, 20. cry out as much as thou wilt on the sinfulness of thy Sin; bewail thy Weakness with a better Man than thy self: *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death?* Rom. 7. 24. But know, that thou hast found Mercy with thy God: Thy repeated Sin may grieve, but cannot hurt thy Soul. Had we to do with a Finite Compassion, it might be abated by wasting it self on a frequent Remission; as some great River may be drawn dry by many small Out-lets: But now, that we deal with a God, whose Mercy is as Himself, Infinite; it is not the Greatness, or the Number of our Offences, that can make a Difference in his Free Remission: That God, who hath charged our weak Charity, *Not to be over-come of Evil, but to over-come Evil with Good*, Rom. 12. 21. justly scorneth that we should think, his Infinite and Incomprehensible Goodness, can be check't with our Evil.

15. IT was not without a singular Providence, that St. Peter came to our Saviour with that Question in his Mouth; *Lord, How often shall*

shall my Brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? that it might fetch from that Blessed Son of God, that gracious Answer, for our perpetual Direction and Comfort: I say not unto thee, until seven times, but until seventy times seven, Matth. 18. 21, 22. Lord, if thou wilt have us sinful Creatures thus indulgent to one another, in the Case of our Mutual Offences; What Limits can be set to thy Mercies in our Sins against Thee? Be we Penitent, Thou canst not but be Gracious.

SECT.

S E C T. V.

Imbecillity of Grace.

I. **T**HOU complaineſt of the *Weakneſs of Grace*: Some little Stirrings thou feeſt of *God's Spirit* within thee; but ſo feeble, that thou canſt not find in them any ſolid Comfort. Thou ſeeſt others (thou ſay'ſt) *whoſe Breſts are full of Milk, and their Bones moiſtned with Marrow*, Job 21. 24. whil'ſt thou languiſheſt under a Spiritual Leanneſs and Imbecillity. Thou wanteſt that vigorous Heat of Holy Affections, and that Alacrity in the Performance of Holy Duties, which thou obſerveſt in other Chriſtians. I like this Complaint of thine, and tell thee, That without this, thou could'ſt not be in the way of Happineſs.

2. **T**HINK'ſT thou, that thoſe whom thou eſteem'ſt more eminent in Grace, make not the ſame moan that thou do'ſt? Certainly, they never had any, if they did not complain of having too little. Every Man beſt feels his own Wants, and is ready to paſs ſecret Cenſures upon himſelf for that, wherein he is applauded by others. Even the Man after *God's own Heart*, can ſay; *But I am Poor and Sorrowful*, Pſal. 69. 29. He was a great King when he ſaid ſo;

so; it was not Meanness in Outward Estate, that troubled him; but a Spiritual Necessity: for he had before, in the same Heavenly Ditty, professed; *O God, thou knowest my Foolishness, and my Guiltiness is not hid from thee*, Psal. 69. 5. It was an old Observation of Wise Solomon; *There is that maketh himself Rich, and hath nothing; there is that maketh himself Poor, yet hath great Riches*, Prov. 13. 7. In this latter Rank are many Pious Souls, and thine (I hope) for one; who certainly had never been so wealthy in Grace, if they had been conceited of greater Store: Even in this Sense many a Saint may say with St. Paul; *When I am weak, then I am strong*; since the very Complaint of Weakness, argues Strength: and, on the contrary, an Opinion of sufficient Grace, is an evident Conviction of meer Eminentness.

3. BUT suppose thy self so poor as thou pretendest; it is not so much what we have, as how we improve it. How many have we known, that have grown Rich out of a little; whereas others, out of a great Stock, have run into Debt and Beggary? Had that *Servant* in the Gospel, who receiv'd but *One Talent*, imploy'd it to the Gain of a *Second*, he had been proportionably as well rewarded, as he that with *Five* gain'd *Ten*. In our Temporal Estate, we are warned by the Wisest Man, to *Take heed of making haste to be Rich*, Prov. 28. 20. And the great Apostle tells us, *That he that would be Rich, falls into many Temptations*, 1 Tim. 6. 9. Surely, there is no small danger also, in affecting to be too suddenly Rich in the Endowments of the Soul:

Soul : This cannot but be accompanied with the Temptation of an unthankful Distrust : for on the one side, he that believes, makes not haste ; and on the other, we cannot be sufficiently thankful for what we have, whil'st we do over eagerly reach after what we have not.

4. TELL me, thou querulous Soul, Do'st thou not acknowledge what thou hast to be the Gift of God ? And wilt thou not allow the Great Benefactor of Heav'n, to dispense his own Favours as He pleaseth ? If He think fit rather to fill thy Vessell with Drops of Grace, art thou discontented, because He doth not pour out his Spirit upon thee in full Vials ? If thou have any at all, it is more than He owes thee, more than thou canst repay Him : Take what thou hast, as an Earnest of more ; and wait thankfully upon his Bounty for the rest : Is it not convenient in a Free Gift, to attend the leisure of the Donor ? What sturdy, and ill-manner'd Beggars are we, if we will not stay at the Door till we be served ; and grudge at our Alms, when it comes ? Look upon the Father of the Faithful, thou shalt find him fourscore, and six Years Childless ; and at last, after he had got *Ishmael* ; he must wait fourteen Years more for the Promised Seed ; and when He had enjoy'd him not much longer than he expected him, he must then sacrifice him to the Giver. Thus must our Faith be exercised in Attendance both for Time and Measure of Mercy.

5. THY Graces are weak ; yet if true, discomfort not thy self : How many weak Bodies have we known, which with careful Tendance,

have enjoy'd better, and longer Health, than those of grosser Constitutions. Neither is it otherwise in the Soul: Soundness of Heart, is Health; Increas'd Degrees of Grace, make up the Strength of that Spiritual Part: If thou have but this Health tenderly observ'd, thou may'st be Happy in the enjoying of thy God, although more Happy in a Comfortable Sense of a stronger Fruition. We have to do with a God, that stands not so much upon Quantity, as Truth of Repentance. He knows we can have nothing, but what He gives us, and enables us to improve: And where He sees our Wills and Endeavours not wanting, He is ready to accept and crown his own Gifts in us, *He will not break the Bruised Reed, nor quench the Smoking Flax*, Matth. 12. 20.

6. THOU art weak in Grace: Be not discourag'd; there are all Ages, all Statures in Christ. Shall the Child repine, that he is not suddenly grown a Man? Shall the Dwarf quarrel, that he is not a Giant? Were there a Standard of Graces, less than which would not be accepted, thou hadst reason to be troubled: But it is so far from that, as that our Saviour hath encharged; *Suffer little Children to come to me, and forbid them not; for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matth. 19. 14. In some Legal Oblations, it pleas'd God to regard Time and Age: *The Lamb for the Passover, and for the Peace-Offering*, Lev. 3. 7. *The Bullock for the Sin-Offering of Israel*, Lev. 4. 14. have their Date assign'd: And in divers Cases, He hath called for *Two Turtle Doves, or two Young Pigeons*, Lev. 1. 14.

Lev.

Lev. 5. 7, 11. Lev. 12. 8. Lev. 15. 14. Young *Turtles*, and Old *Doves*, in the mean while, (according to our *Jewish* Doctors) were unlawful to be offer'd: But in our Spiritual Sacrifices, all Ages are equally accepted: He that is Eternal, regards not Time; He that is Infinite and Almighty, regards not Statures: Even the Eleventh Hour, carried the Penny, as well as the First: *And let the Weak say, I am strong*, Joel 3. 10.

7. IT troubles thee, that thou hast made so slow a Progress in Graces: Thy Desire is to Heav'n-ward, and thou checkest thy self for no more Speed: It is an happy Ambition, that carries thee on in that way to Blessedness. Quicken thy self what thou canst, with all Gracious Incitations, in that Holy Course: But know, that we must not always hope to go thither in a full Career; in that Passage, there are ways that will not admit of haste: How many have we known, that by too much forwardness, have been cast back in their Journey, whether through want of Breath, mistaking their Way, or misplacing their Steps? I am glad, that it is the Desire of thy Soul, to *Run the way of God's Commandments*, Psal. 119. 32. and do encourage thine Holy Zeal, in pursuing that Holy Race; ever praying thou may'st *so run, as that thou may'st obtain*, 1 Cor. 9. 24. But withal, I must tell thee, that, *Blessed is the Man, that doth but walk in the Law of the Lord*, Psal. 119. 1. Whil'st thou passest on, though but a Foot-pace, thou art every Step nearer to thy Glory: And so long as thou gain'st way, thou art safe. *Blessed is the Man, whose Strength is in*

Thee, O God ; in whose Heart are thy Ways ; who passing through the Vale of Misery, goes on from Strength to Strength, till he appear before Thee his God in Zion, Psal. 84. 5, 6, 7.

8. THY Grace is little ; but thou wishest and labourest for more : This is a good Beginning of Heavenly Wealth : For he is in a good way to Riches, that desires to thrive ; and never any Holy Soul lost her Longing. If thy Wishes be hearty and serious, thou hast that thou desirest, or at least, shalt be assur'd of it. *If any Man lack Wisdom, let him ask it of God ; who giveth to all Men liberally, and upbraideth no Man ; and it shall be given him, Jam. 1. 5.* Were this Condition offer'd us for Worldly Riches, who would be Poor ? If we embrace it not in Spirituals, either we distrust the Promises, or neglect our own Mercies. In Temporal things, how many have so eagerly follow'd the Chase of the World, that they have over-run it ; and whil'st they have greedily swallow'd Gain, have been choak'd with it ? But in those better Blessings, Earnestness of Desire, and Fervour of Prosecution, was always answer'd with a Gracious Impetration.

9. THOU art poor in Spirit ; but in an humble Dejection, long'st for more : Know, that an humble Poverty, is better than a proud Fulness : Wert thou Poor and Proud, there were no hope of thy Proficiency : Thy false Conception lies in the way of thy Improvement ; and many a one had been Gracious, had they not so esteem'd themselves : But now that thou art Meaner in thine Opinion, than in thine Estate

state, who can more justly challenge our *Saviours* Blessing; *Blessed are the Poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven?* Matth. 5. 3.

10. THOU art weak in Heart: It is thine own Fault, if thou acquir'st not more Strength. Wherefore is prepar'd that Heavenly Food of the Word and Sacraments, but to nourish thy Soul to Eternal Life? Do but Eat and Digest, and thou canst not but grow stronger. *God* will not be wanting to thee in an Increase of Grace, if thou be not wanting to thy self: He offers his Holy Spirit to thee, with the Means; and it is thy sinful neglect, if thou separate 'em. Thou knowest in whose Hands is the Staff of Bread; pray, That He who gives thee the Food, and the Mouth, would also give the Appetite, Digestion, and Nourishment.

11. THY Spirit is weak: It concerns thee so much the more to be cautious, in avoiding Occasions of Temptation. He that carries brittle Glasses, is careful of 'em, lest they should break; whereas strong Metal fears no danger: So he that has but a small Rush-Light, walks gently, and keeps off every Air. Thou art weak, thy *God* is strong. Do'st thou not see the feeble Child that finds he cannot go alone, how fast he clings to the Hand of his Mother; more trusting to her Help, than his own Strength? Do thou so to thy *God*; and say with the Blessed Psalmist; *Hold up my goings in thy Faths, that my Foot-steps slip not*, Psal. 17. 5. *Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe*, Psal. 119. 117. *Uphold me according to thy Word, that I may live, and let me not be ashamed of my Hope*, Psal. 119. 116.

12. St. *PETER* was very presumptuous, in attempting to tread on the Liquid Face of the Waters: But he that ventured to walk There, upon the Strength of his Faith, when he felt the stiff Wind, and saw the great Billow, began to sink in his Weakness: But no sooner had *Jesus* stretch'd forth his Hand, and caught him, than he takes Courage, and goes now with the same Confidence upon the Sea, as he was used to go on the Land: Together with a Check, he receives more Supportation from *Christ*, than his own Legs could afford him; *Matth.* 14. 29, 30, 31. Fear no Miscarriage therefore, through thine own Weakness, whilst thou art held up by that Strong Helper.

SECT.

S E C T. VI.

Loss of Reputation.

1. **N**EXT to our Body and Soul, is the Care of our Reputation; which who so hath lost, is no better than dead to the World. Thou sufferest under a Publick Infamy; I do not ask how justly: He was a wise Man that said, It was fit for every good Man to fear even a false Reproach: A good Name is no less wounded for the time with that, than with a just Crimination. This is a sore Evil; against which there is no Preservative, nor hardly can be prescrib'd any Remedy: Innocence it self, is no Antidote against Evil Tongues: Neither Greatness, nor Sanctity, can secure any Man from unjust Calumny.

2. **MIGHT** that be any Ease to thy Heart, I could tell thee of the Greatest of *Kings*, and Holiest of *Saints*, that have grievously complain'd of this Misfortune, and yet were not able to help themselves. Thou hast the Company of the best that ever the Earth bore, if that may be any Mitigation of thy Misery. But what do I speak of sinful Men, whose greatest Purity might be blurr'd with some Imperfections? Look upon the *Lord of Life, the Eternal Son of*

the ever-living God, God cloathed in Flesh; and see whether any other were his Lot, whil'st He sojourn'd in this Region of Mortality: Do'st thou not hear Him for his Gracious Sociableness, branded as a Man *Gluttonous, a Wine-bibber, a Friend of Publicans and Sinners?* Matth. 11. 19. Do'st thou not hear Him for his Powerful, and Merciful Cure of Demoniacks, blazon'd for a Fellow that *Casts out Devils through Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils?* Matth. 12. 24. Do'st thou not hear Him slander'd to Death for *Treason against Cæsar, and Blasphemy against God?* John 19. 12. Matth. 26. 65. Do'st thou not hear the Multitude say, *He is mad, and hath a Devil?* Joh. 10. 20. Do'st thou not hear Him after his Death counted an *Impostor?* Matth. 27. 63. And can there be worse Names, than *Glutton, Drunkard, Conjuror, and Traytor, Blasphemer, Mad-man, Demoniack, and Impostor?* Who then can henceforth think much to be slander'd with meaner Crimes, when he hears the most Holy Son of God, in whose Mouth was no Guile, and in whom *The Prince of this VVorld could find nothing,* laden with so hainous Calumniationes? Joh. 14. 30.

3. THOU art smitten with a fowl Tongue; which penetrates deep into thy Soul. That Man gave a high Praise to his Sword, that said, It was sharper than Slander: and if a Razor be yet sharper, such did *David* find the *Edomites* Tongue, *Psal. 52. 2.* And if these Weapons reach not yet far enough, he found both *Spears and Arrows* in the Mouths of his Traducers, *Psal. 57. 4.* Thou art in the same Circumstance with
the

the Man after *God's* own Heart: What should'st thou do, but for *David's* Complaint, use his Remedy? *I will cry unto God most high, unto God that performeth all things for me: He shall send from Heav'n, and save me from the Reproach of him that would swallow me up: God shall send forth his Mercy, and his Truth,* Psal. 57. 2, 3. Do by thy Reproaches, as *Hezekiah* did by the Railing Lines of *Rabshakeh*, spread them before the Lord, and leave thy Cause in the just Hands of that Great Arbitrator of Heav'n and Earth; who will be sure, in his good time, to revenge thy Wrong, and clear thine Innocency; and will requite thee Good for their Malice and Envy.

4. IN the mean time, thou complain'st of standing blemish'd with an odious Aspersions, and thy Name passing through many censorious Mouths. Thou hear'st what others say; but do'st thou make a particular Search in thine own Bosom? If thy Conscience acquit thee, and pronounce thee Guiltless, obdure thy Face against all the Spight of Malice. What is ill Fame, but a little corrupted, unsavoury Breath? Do but turn thine Ear from the Reception of it, and what art thou the worse? It is thy Weakness, if thou suffer thy self to be blown over by the meer Air of some putrified Lungs; which if thou do'st but a little decline, by not valuing it, will soon vanish.

5. THOU art under ill Tongues: This is an Evil proper only to Man: Other Creatures are no less subject to Diseases, to Death, to outward Violence, than he is; but none else can be
obnoxious

obnoxious to a Detraction, since they are not capable of Speech; whereby a Slander can be form'd: They have their several Sounds and Notes of Expression, whereby they can signifie their Dislike and Anger: But only Man can cloath his angry Thoughts with Words of Offence; so as that Faculty, which was given him for an Advantage, is depraved to a further Mischief. But the same Liberal Hand of his Creator, hath also endued him with a Property of Reason; which, as it ought to direct his Tongue to others, so how it instructs him to make use of others Speeches to him: and where he finds it unjust, either to convince it by a just Apology, or to contemn it. If therefore thou understandest thy self to lie under an unjust Obloquy, have so much of the Man in thee, as either to confute, or despise it.

6. THOU art shamefully traduc'd: I could pity thy Suffering; but withal, give me leave to enquire not so much what thou suffer'st, as for what: If for a good Cause, I shall turn my Pity into Envy: Truth it self hath told thee, Thou art in the way to Blessedness. Who can pity thee for that, wherein thou hast cause to rejoyce? *Blessed are ye when Men revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of Evil against you falsely, for my sake; rejoyce, and be exceeding glad, for great is your Reward in Heaven, Matth. 5. 11.* Rather pluck up thy Spirits, and take up the Resolution of Holy Job, that Man of Patience: *If mine Adversary had written a Book against me, surely I would take it upon my Shoulders, and bind it as a Crown to me, Job 31. 35,*
36.

36. And say with that gracious King of Israel; *I will be yet more vile for the Lord,* 2 Sam. 6. 22.

7. THOU art reproach'd by lewd Men: Thank thy own Vertue, that thou art envied. Wert thou so bad as thy Detractors, thou would'st sit quiet enough. *If ye were of the World, (saith our Saviour) the World would love his own: but because ye are not of the World, but I have chosen you out of the World; therefore the World hateth you,* John 15. 19. Whil'st the Moon sets, no Dogs bark at her; it is her Shining, that opens their Mouths: Wert thou either Obscure or Wicked, thou might'st be safe; but if thou wilt needs be eminently Good, look for the Lashes of ill Tongues. *They think it strange, that you run not with them into the same Excess of Riot, speaking Evil of you,* saith the Prime Apostle; 1 Pet. 4. 4.

8. IT was not without Reason, that the great Musician in the Story, struck his Scholar, because he saw the Multitude applaud his Skill; well knowing, that had he been true to his Art, those mis-judging Ears could not have approved him. What more excellent Instruments had God ever in his Church, than the Blessed Apostles? and what Acceptation found they on the Earth? *Being defamed, we intreat: We are made as the Filth of the World, and are the Off-scouring of all things unto this Day: We are made a Spectacle to the World, to Angels, and to Men,* 1 Cor. 4. 9, 13. Complain, if thou canst, of a worse Condition, than these Great Ambassadors of the high God; otherwise, resolve with the Holy Apostle, to pass cheer-

cheerfully through Honor and Dishonor, through evil Report, and good Report, towards the Goal of Immortality.

9. THOU art disgrac'd through slanderous Reports: It is not meer Air, that we live by. How many hast thou known, that have blown over a just Infamy, with a careless Neglect? Pleasing themselves to think, that they have thriven even under Curses: And shall their Guiltines be entertain'd with more Courage than thine Innocence? Let those whose Heart is as foul as their Names, be troubled with deserv'd Censures: Do not thou give so much way to Malice, as to yield any Regard to her mis-raised Suggestions. Thou canst not devise how more to vex a Detractor, than by Contemt. Thus thou shalt force Spight, as that wise *Heathen* truly said, to drink of the greatest Part of her own Poyson.

10. THOU art disgrac'd with an ill Fame: What a poor matter is this? How far do'st thou think that Sound reacheth? Perhaps to the next Village; perhaps further to the whole Shire, wherein thou dwellest: It is like, the next County never heard of thy Name: And if thou look yet further off; as soon may'st thou be talk't of amongst the *Antipodes*, as in the Neighbouring Region. And what a small Spot of Earth is this, to which thy Shame is confin'd? Did'st thou know the vast Extent of this great World, thou would'st easily see into how narrow a Corner either our Glory, or Dishonour, can be shut up: and would'st confess how little Reason we can have to affect the One, or be disheartned with the Other.

11. THOU

11. THOU art wronged with an unjust Disgrace: Have *Patience* a while; Slanders are not long-liv'd: Truth is the Child of Time; ere long she shall appear, and vindicate thee. Wait upon the *God* of Truth, who shall cause *Thy Light to break forth as the Morning; and thine Health to spring forth speedily*, Isa. 58. 8. But if otherwise, what speakest thou of his Name; which, as it is Local, so it is Momentany, soon passed over in Silence, and Oblivion? There is a Shame, which is worthy of thy Fear; which is both Universal, before the Face of all the World, of Angels, and Men; and beyond the reach of Time, Eternal: Fear This, and condemn the Other.

12. ON the contrary; If Fame should befriend thee so much, as to strain her Cheeks in founding thy Praises; and should cry thee up for Vertuous, and Eminent every way: *Alas! how few shall hear her, and how soon is that Noise stilled, and forgotten?* Eccles. 9. 16. Shortly, Then let it be thy main Care, to demean thy self Holi-ly and Conscionably before *God* and Men; leave the rest upon *God*, who shall be sure to make his Word good, in spite of Men and Devils: *The Memory of the Just shall be blessed, but the Name of the Wicked shall rot*, Prov. 10. 7.

S E C T. VII.

Of Publick Calamities.

1. **T**HOU art afflicted with the Publick Calamities: So it becomes thee as a good Man, a good Christian, a good Patriot. We are not entire Pieces, but are Limbs of a Community both of Church and Kingdom: While the whole Body suffers, how can we be free? This should be no News to us: What Earthly Kingdom or State hath ever enjoy'd a constant Felicity? These Publick Bodies, like as single Persons, have their Birth, their Infancy, their Youth, their Vigour, their Declinations: Even the White Marble of that famous Emblem, and Type of *God's Church*, after not many Centuries of Years, felt the Dint of Time, and mould'ed to nothing.

2. I T is as much as those Heav'nly Bodies above can do, to avoid Mutation: And well might we be distracted with these Troubles, if we did not know from whence they come; even from a most Wise, Holy, Powerful, and just Providence: He that sits in Heav'n, orders these Earthly Affairs according to the Eternal Counsel of his Will: It is that Almighty Hand, that holds the Stern of this rolled Vessel, and steers it in that Course

Course which He knows best: It is not for us that are Passengers, to meddle with the Card or Compass: Let that All-skilful Pilot alone with his own Work: He knows every Rock and Shelf, that may endanger it; and can cut the proudest Billow, that threatens it, with Ease. *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good,* 1 Sam. 3. 18.

3. WERE there no other respects than Personal, I cannot blame thee, if thy Fears strive with thy Grief for the Publick Evils: Every Man's Interest is involv'd in the Common; and if the Ship sink, what will become of the Passengers? But withal, there is a kind of inbred Sympathy in every good Heart, which gives us a Share in all other Miseries, and affects us more deeply for Them, than for our Own. Old indulgent *Eli* lov'd his Sons too well, and was therefore, no doubt, very sensible of their Death; yet that part of the News passed over with some, not mortal, Passion: but when he heard of the *Ark of God taken* now, his Neck and Heart were broken together: And his Religious Daughter-in-Law, though she were Deliver'd upon this Report, of a Son; yet she died in Travel of that heavy News, and could live only to say, *Ichabod; the Glory is departed from Israel; for the Ark of God is taken,* 1 Sam. 4. 17, 18, 21, 22. disregarding her new Son, when she heard of the Loss of her People, and of her God.

4. HOW many *Pagans* have we read of, that have died resolutely for their Country, cheerfully sacrificing themselves to the Publick? How many,

many, that would die with their Country, hating to think of over-living the common Ruin? How many, that have professed a Scorn to be beholden for their Lives to their Peoples Murtherers? We shall as soon extinguish both Grace and Nature, as quit this Compassionate Sense of the Common Calamities.

5. THOU grieveest for the Publick Distempers: Mourn not as one without Faith: Be sure, *He that keepeth Isreal, will neither slumber nor sleep,* Psal. 121. 4. Wherefore was *The Holy Tabernacle over-spread with Skins*, but to figure out unto us *God's Church*, shelt'ed under a sure Protection? *Exod. 26. 7.* He that was so curious of the Custody of his Material Temple, by Night as well as by Day, that a sleeping *Levite* might not escape beating, and burning of Garments; How careful do we think, He will ever be of his Spiritual, and Living House? How unmeet Judges are we of his Holy Proceedings? We are ready to measure his Love still by an outward Prosperity, than which nothing can be more uncertain?

6. THE *Almighty* goes by other Rules; such as are most Consonant to his Infinite Justice and Mercy: I am abash'd to hear a *Pagan*, though no Vulgar one, say; *Whatsoever is brought to pass, a wise Man thinks, ought to be so done; neither goes about to rebuke Nature: but finds it best to suffer what he cannot alter:* And shall we Christians repine at those seemingly harsh Events, which we see fall out in *God's Church*, whil'st we are ignorant of his Designs? and be ready to bless a thriving

thriving Prophaneness? Look abroad upon the antient Lot of *God's* Inheritance, and their Corrivals in Glory; thou shalt see the Father of *Esau* Flourishing and Renowned, yielding besides *Dukes*, eight *Kings* of his Line; whilst poor *Israel* was toying and sweating in the *Egyptian* Furnaces: Yet we know the Word to stand inviolable; *The Elder shall serve the Younger*; and, *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.*

7. WHAT if that Great and Wise *God*, (who works oft-times by Contraries, and brings Light out of Darkness) have purposed to dispense Honour and Happiness to his Church out of this sad Affliction? Metals are never so bright, as when they are polish'd: Perfumes and Spices never so Redolent, as when they have endur'd the Fire, and the Pestle. Wilt thou not give the *Physician* leave to make use of his *Mithridate*, because there are *Vipers* in the Composition? How unworthy art thou of Health, if thou wilt not trust the Fidelity and Skill of the Artist, in mixing so wholsom a Cordial?

8. THOU art troubled with the Publick Miseries: Take heed that thy Grief be clear of all Impiety. Would'st thou not have *God* to be Just; that is, Himself? Would'st thou not allow it an Act of his Justice, to punish Sins? Canst thou deny, that our Sins have reacht up to Heav'n, and call'd for Judgment? *Wherefore doth a living Man complain? a Man for the Punishment of his Sin?* Lam. 3. 39. I read of a Devout Man, that was instant with *God* in his Prayers, for a Nation not far off: and was answer'd; *Suffer the Proud to be humbled.* Whether

we will suffer it or no, the just *God* will humble the Proud, and punish the Sinful. The wonderful *Patience*, and Infinite Justice of the *Almighty*, hath set Limits to the Wickedness of every People. *The Iniquity of the Amorites is not yet at the full*, saith *God* to *Abraham*, Gen. 15. 16. When the Measure is once made up, it is time for *God* to strike: Then we complain, when perhaps 'tis too late.

9. WOULDST thou know what Remedy is to be us'd, for the preventing of a Destructive Vengeance? There is no way under Heav'n, but this, to break off our Sins by a seasonable and serious Repentance: by the united Forces of our Holy Resolutions, and Endeavours, to make an Head against our over-bearing Wickednesses, and not to suffer it to fill up towards the Brim of that fatal *Epab*; till which time, the Long-suffering *God* only threatens, and corrects a People: but then He plagues them; and insists upon the necessity of his inviolable Justice. *Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? and shall not my Soul be avenged on such a Nation as this?* Jer. 5. 9.

10. THOU mournest for the common Sufferings: Thou do'st well; our Fears can never be better bestow'd: But in the mean time, is not thy Hand in them? Have not thy Sins helped to make up this irritating Heap? Hast thou not cast in thy Symbole into the common Shot? May not the Times justly challenge thee in part, as accessory to their Misery? Begin at Home, if thou wish well to the Publick; and make thine own Peace with thy *God*, for thy particular

cular Offences: Renew thy Covenant with *God*, of a more holy and strict Obedience; and then pour out thy Prayers and Tears for an universal Mercy: So shalt thou not only pull away one Brand from this Consuming Fire, but help effectually to quench the Common Conflagration.

II. THY Heart bleeds to see the woful Vastation of Civil Discord, and the deadly Fury of Home-bred Enemies: Certainly, there is nothing under Heav'n more ghastly and dreadful, than the Face of an Intestine War; nothing that doth so nearly resemble Hell: Here is altogether Killing, and Dying, and Torturing, Burning, Shrieks, Cries, and Ejaculations, fearful Sounds, and furious Violences; and whatsoever may either cause or increase Horror: The present Calamity oppresses one, another Fear: One is quivering in Death, another trembles to expect it: One begs for Life, another will sell it dearer: Here one would rescue one Life, and loseth two; there another would hide himself, where he finds a Merciless Death: Here lies one bleeding, groaning, and gasping, parting with his Soul in extremity of Anguish; There another of stronger Spirits; kills, and dies at once: Here one wrings her Hands, tears her Hair, and seeks for some Instrument of a self-inflicted Death, rather than yield her Chast Body to the Lust of a Bloody Ravisher; another clings inseparably to a dear Husband; and will rather take part of the Murtherers Sword, than let go her last Embraces: One is tortured for the Discovery of hid Treasure;

another dying upon the Rack, out of Jealousie.

12. IT is pity, that Men and Christians should be so bloodily cruel one to another ! That he who bears the Image of the Merciful *God*, should thus turn Fiend to his own Flesh and Blood ! These are terrible things, and worthy of our bitterest Lamentations ! I love the Speculation of *Seneca's* Resolutely-Wise Man,

Senec. Epist. that could look upon the glittering Sword of an Executioner, 76. with erected and undazled Eyes ; and that makes it no matter of Difference, whether his Soul pass out of his Mouth, or at his Throat : But I should more admire the Practice. Whil'st we carry this Clay about us, Nature cannot but in the best of us, shrink in at the Sight and Apprehension of Death : Yet even these are the due Revenges of the *Almighties* Punitive Justice ; so provok'd by our Sins, that we cannot lay Claim to an easier Judgment.

13. DOST thou not see it ordinary with *Physicians*, when they find the Body highly distemper'd, and the Blood foul and inflam'd, to order the opening of a Vein, and the drawing out of so many Ounces, as may leave the rest fit for Correction ? Why art thou overtroubled to see the great *Physician* of the World take this Course with sinful Man-kind ? Certainly, had not this great Body, by mis-dieting, and wilful Disorder, contracted these Spiritual Diseases, under which we languish ; had it not defiled the Blood that runs in these common Veins, with Riots and Surfeits, we had never

never been so miserable, as to see these Torrents of Christian Blood running down our Channels: But for the future, could we bewail and abandon our former Wickednesses, we might live in hope, that at the last, this deadly Issue might stop, and dry up; and that there might be yet left a Possibility of a Blessed Recovery.

14. THOU art amaz'd with Grief, to see the Pestilence raging in our Streets; in so frequent a Mortality, as breeds a Question concerning the number of the Living, and the Dead: That which is wont to abate other Miseries, heightens this; the Company of Participants. It was certainly a very hard, and sad Option, that God gave to King David, after his sin of numbring the People: *Chuse thee whether seven years Famine shall come unto thee in thy Land, or three months Flight before thine Enemies, or three days Pestilence,* 2 Sam. 24. 13. We may believe the good King, when we hear him say, *I am in a great Strait*; doubtless, so he was: but his wise Resolutions soon brought him out: *Let us fall now into the Hands of the Lord, (for his Mercies are great) and let me not fall into the Hands of Man,* 2 Sam. 24. 14. He that was to send these Evils, knew their Value, and the difference of their Malignity.

15. YET He opposes three days Pestilence, to seven years Famine, and three months Vanquishment: So much advantage He knew there was, betwixt the dull Activity of Man, and the quick Dispatch of an Angel! It was a Favour, that the Angel of Death, who in *One Night* destroy'd

stroy'd an *Hundred fourscore and five thousand Assyrians*, 2 King. 19. 35. should in three days cut off but *Seventy thousand Israelites*: But the *Almighty*, in his Judgments, remembers Mercy. We read of the Region of *Grand Cairo*, wherein eighteen hundred thousand were swept away in one Year. Pestilence; enough, one would think, to have populated the whole Earth: And in our Chronicles, of so general a Mortality, that the Living were hardly sufficient to bury the Dead. In the Year 1624, died of the Plague in one Week, four thousand four hundred sixty three; and in our last Visitation, 1665, was a larger number: in one Week, seven thousand one hundred sixty and five; and in the whole Year, sixty eight thousand five hundred ninety six: It was his tender Mercy, that He spared any of us alive: But He wounds, that He may heal; and in wounding, heals us; for his Compassions fail not unto us Sinners.

16. THESE are dreadful Demonstrations of *God's* heavy Displeasure: But yet there is this Alleviation of our Misery, that we suffer more immediately from an Holy, Just, Merciful *God*. The Kingly Prophet had never made that Distinction in his woful Choice, if he had not known a notable Difference betwixt the Sword of an Angel, and an Enemy; betwixt *God's* more direct and immediate Infliction, and that which is deriv'd to us through the Malice of Men. It was but a poor Consolation, that is given by a Victorious Enemy, to dying *Lausus* in the Poet; *Comfort thy self in thy Death with this, that thou fallest by the Hand of Æneas*. But surely,
we

we have just Reason to raise Comfort to our Souls, when the Pains of a Pestilential Death compass us about, from the Thought and Intuition of that Holy and Gracious Hand, under which we suffer: so as we can say with good *Eli, It is the Lord.*

17. IT is not amiss to call those Marks of deadly Infection, *God's Tokens*; such sure they are: and ought therefore to call up our Eyes, and Hearts to that Almighty Power that sends them, with the Faithful Resolution of Holy *Job*; *Though thou kill me, yet will I trust in thee.* It is none of the least Miseries of Contagious Sickness, that it bars us from the Comfortable Society and Attendance of Friends; or, if otherwise, repays their Love, and kind Visitation with Death. Be not dismayed with this sad Solitude; thou hast Company with thee, whom no Infection can indanger, or exclude: There is an invisible Friend, that will be sure to stick by thee so much more closely, by how much thou art more avoided by Neighbours; and *will make all thy Bed in thy Sickness*, and supply thee with those Cordials, which thou should'st in vain expect from Earthly Visitants.

18. INDEED, justly do we stile this *The Sickness*; eminently grievous both for the Mortalness, and Generality of the Dispersion: Yet there is a Remedy, that can both cure and confine it: Let but every Man look well to the Plague of his own Heart, and the Land is healed. Can we, with *David*, but see the Angel that smites us, and erect an Altar; and offer to *God* the Sacrifices of our Prayers, Penitence and Obedience,

bedience, we shall hear Him say, *It is enough*, 2 Sam. 24. 16. His Mercies are everlasting, and his Remedies certain: Be we but Penitent, and we cannot be Miserable.

19. WE soon forgot this Visitation; the loss of Friends, and God's Judgments, (and thought, with foolish *Agag*, that *Surely the Bitterness of Death is past*, 1 Sam. 15 32.) and provok'd Him still to Wrath against us; we must have after our Contagion, a Purgation by *Fire*; which the best *Naturalists* say, is a proper Remedy against Infection; the *Almighty* seeing it necessary to use this Prescription, prepar'd it into a Medicine: That great Conflagration, which consumed most part of our City to Ashes: It was dreadful to behold, and made most Hearts tremble; yet what signs of Remorse do we shew? What Vanity (I fear I may ask, what Vice) have we subtracted, upon the Sense of God's Anger? What Nicety in Cloaths, or Diet, have we cut off, in sympathy with the Nakedness and Hunger of our afflicted Brethren? Nay, do not the unreasonable Jollities among us, look as if we triumph'd in their Misereries, found Musick in the Discordant Sound of their Groans, and our own Laughter; and emulated that Infamous Barbarity of *Nero*, who play'd while *Rome* burn'd? 'Tis mention'd by the Prophet, as a most Preposterous thing, a kind of impious Solæcisme, to revel under the Menace of Judgments: *Amos 4. 11. I have over-thrown some of you, as God over-threw Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a Fire-brand pluckt out of the Burning:*

ing: yet have ye not return'd to me, saith the Lord.

20. FIRE is the *Eagle* in Nature; Nothing in the Elementary World mounts so high to its Place, and stoops so low to its Prey: The two Properties *God* himself ascribes to that Bird, *Job* 39. 27, 30. And if we still refuse obstinately to be gather'd, like Chickens, under our *Lord's* Wings, He can again let loose this Bird of Prey, this *Eagle* of Heav'n, upon us: and from the East, where it began before, flie it home like Lightning even to the utmost West, to seize, and to devour where-ever there is the least Quarry remaining.

21. NEXT, *Gebal*, and *Ammon*, and *Amalek*, and the rest that *Hell*, and *Rome*, and their Partizans, our Enemies on all Hands, both Foreign and Domestick, have been so long Confederate against us, saying; *Come, and let us root them out, that they be no more a People*; that the Name of that Reformed Church of *England*, may be no more in remembrance: They have often attempted to bring about their malicious Designs; and yet have not been able to seize us: To what can we justly ascribe all this, but to the Gracious Protection of Almighty *God*, to whom we must fly for Defence and Aid.

22. AND now, when restless, and unquiet Men (the true Spawn of him, whose Tail drew the third part of the Stars of Heav'n, and cast them to the Earth) would fain by their Hellish Plots, and 'Contrivances, bring us down again from thence, even down to the very Ground, and lay all our Honour in the Dust: When
by

by their secret Machinations, they are at work on all sides, to hurry us back into the old Confusions; in hope, that out of that disorder'd Mass, they may at length rear up a new World of their own; (but what a World? a World made up of a New Heav'n of Superstitions, and Idolatries: A New Earth too, of Anarchy first, and pretended Liberty; but of Tyranny insufferable, at the next Remove.)

22. IN such a dangerous State of Affairs as this, whether should we rather (nay, whether else can we) seek for Help, and Deliverance, but under his Protections; the stretching out of whose Arms of Providence, fills the Breadth of thy Land, O *England*! He can make all these Cöckatrice Eggs, on which this Generation of Vipers (that eat out the Bowels of their Mother) have sat so long abroad, windy at last, and addle; and He will do it: So that out of the Serpents Root shall never come forth an Adder, to bite us, or a fiery flying Serpent, to devour us. He can confound these *Babel*-Builders, with their City, Tower, and Temple; their Forreign Polity, and their strange Worship; their Novel Modes, and Models of Government, in Church and State; and scatter them abroad from hence upon the Face of all the Earth, like as a Dream when one awaketh: So shall He despise their *Images*, and their Imaginations too, and make their whole Contrivance to consume away like a Snail; and *Become like the untimely Fruit of a Woman, which shall never see the Sun.*

24. AND now let us cry mightily unto *God*, and say : Remember not, *Lord*, our Offences, nor the Offences of our Fore-Fathers, neither take thou Vengeance of our Sins : Spare us, good *Lord*, spare thy People whom thou hast Redeemed with thy most Precious Blood ; and be not angry with us for ever. *And*, Good *Lord* deliver us, from Lightning and Tempest ; from Plague, Pestilence, Famine, and Fire ; from Battle and Murder, and from sudden Death ; from all Sedition and Faction, Privy Conspiracy and Rebellion ; from all False Doctrine, Heresie, and Schism ; from Hardness of Heart, and Contempt of thy Word and Commandment : *Libera nos Domine.*

SECT.

S E C T. VII.

Loss of Friends.

1. **T**HOU hast lost thy *Friend*: Thy Sorrow is Just; the Earth hath nothing more precious, than that which thou hast parted with: For what is a *Friend*, but a Man's self in another Skin? a Soul divided into two Bodies? both which are animated by the same Spirit. It is some-what worse with thee therefore, than a Palsied Man, whose one half is stricken with a dead kind of Numbness; he hath lost but the use of one side of his Body, thou the one half of thy Soul: Or may I not with better Assurance, say, That a true *Friend* hath, as it were, two Souls in one Body; his Own, and his *Friends*? It was so with *Jonathan*, and *David*; *The Soul of Jonathan was knit with the Soul of David*; and *Jonathan lov'd him as his own Soul*, 1 Sam. 18. 1.

2. **S**TILL the more Goodness, the stronger Union; meer Nature can never be so fast a Cement of Souls, as Grace: For here the Union is wrought by a better Spirit than our own, even that Blessed Spirit, who styles himself by the Name of *Love*, 1 John 4. 18. The greater thine Affection was, the heavier is thy Loss:

But

But let me tell thee, I fear, thou art too much accessary to thine own Affliction: Did'st thou look for this Loss? Did thy Heart say, What if we should part? Did'st thou not over-enjoy this Blessing, whil'st thou hadst it? These are no small Disadvantages.

3. AS every other Evil, so this especially is aggravated by our Unexpectation: Neither hadst thou been so oppressed with this Sorrow, if thou had'st fore-seen it, and met it on the way: It is our weak Inconsideration, if we do so welcom these Earthly Comforts, not as Guests, but as Inmates; and as some that are importunately Hospitable, so entertain their Friends, that they have no power to give them Leave to depart: Whereas we ought, according to the wise Advice of *Seneca*, so to possess 'em, as those that make Account to fore-go 'em; and so fore-go 'em, as if we possess'd 'em still: And the Apostle *St. Paul* gives us this Advice, to *Use this World, as if we us'd it not; for the Fashion of this World passeth away*, 1 Cor. 7. 30, 31.

4. THOU art griev'd for the Loss of a Dear *Friend*: Take heed, lest thy Love had too much of the Man, and too little of *God*: All Blessings, as they come down from the Father of Mercies, so should be enjoy'd in Him: and if we enjoy 'em as in themselves, our Love begins to degenerate into Carnal. It is a sure Rule, that all Love depends upon the thing affected; but when that ceaseth, the Love is extinguish't: As he that loves a Face only for Beauty, when that Beauty is defaced by Deformity,
present-

presently cools in his Affection: He that respects a Man for his Bounty only, disregards him when he sees him impoverish'd.

5. DID'ST thou value thy *Friend* only for his Wit, his Complaisance, and his kind Offices? All these are now lost, and thy Love with them: But if thou did'st affect him for Eminency in Goodness, for the sake of that *God* that dwelt in him, thy Love cannot be lost; because thou still enjoy'st that *God*, in whom thou loved'st him. Comfort thy self therefore in that *God*, in whom he was thine, and yield him cheerfully into those Hands, from whom thou receiv'dst him.

6. THOU hast lost a true *Friend*: That Jewel was worthy to be priz'd more Precious, for the Rarity of it. The World affords Friends enough, such as they are: Friends of the Purple, as *Tertullian* calls them; Friends of the Basket, as the Poet nominates them; such as love thy Loaves and Fishes, and thee for them. *Wealth makes many Friends*, saith the Wise Man, *Prov. 14. 20.* and *Chap. 19. 4.* But where is the Man, that loves thee for thy self, and for being Vertuous, divested of all By-respects? Whil'st there is Honey in thy Gally-Pot, the Wasps and Flies will be buzzing about it; but the Honey being gone, the emty Vessel remains quiet.

7. WAS he so much thine, as not to leave thee in thy Adversity? Did he honour thee, when thou wert despised of the World? Did he follow thee with Applause, whil'st thou wert hooted at by the Multitude? Would he have
own'd

own'd thee, if he had found thee stripped and wounded in the Wilderness? Such a *Friend* is worthy of thy Tears: But take heed, thy Love prove not envious. If thy *God* hath thought him fitter for the Society of Saints and Angels, do'st thou repine at his Happiness? Thou hast lost his Presence; he is advanc'd to the Beatifical Presence of the *King* of Glory: Whether is thy Loss, or his Gain the greater?

8. THOU hast lost thy *Friend*: Say rather, Thou hast parted with him. That is properly lost, which is past all Recovery, which we are out of hope to see any more: It is not so with this *Friend* thou mourn'st for: He is but gone Home a little before thee; thou art following him: You will both meet in your Father's House, and enjoy each other more happily, than you could have done here below. How just is that Charge of the Blessed Apostle; *That we should not mourn as Men without Hope, for those that do but sleep in Jesus*, 1 Thess. 4. 13, 14. Did we think their Souls vanish'd into Air, (as that Heathen Poet prophanely expresseth it) and their Bodies resolv'd into Dust, without all Possibility of Reparation, we might well weep out our Eyes for the utter Extinction of those we lov'd: But if *They do but sleep, they shall do well*, Joh. 11. 12. Why are we Impatient for their silent Reposal in the Bed of Earth, when we are assured of their waking to Glory?

9. THOU hast lost a Dear Wife, the Wife of thy Youth, the Desire of thine Eyes, Prov. 5. 18. Isa. 54. 6. Ezek. 24. 16. Did you not take one another upon the Terms of Re-delivery, when

when ye should be call'd for? Were you not, in your very Uniting, put in mind of your Dissolution? *Till Death us do part.* Was she Vertuous? Know'st thou not, that there was a Pre-Contract betwixt thy *Saviour*, and her Soul, ere thou could'st lay any Claim to her Body? And canst thou now grudge his Challenge of his own? Wilt thou not allow Him to call for a Consummation of that Happy Match? Did'st thou so over-love her, that thou would'st not have her Soul glorious? If thou loved'st her not as a Man, but as a Christian, envy her not to that better Husband above, who gives her no less Dowry, than Immortality.

10. **THY Son** is dead: What marvel is it, that a Mortal *Father* hath begot a Mortal *Son*? Marvel rather, that thou hast liv'd to enjoy, and to lose a *Son*. We lie open to so many Casualties, that our very Subsistence is almost Miraculous. Thou hast lost a piece of thy self: for what are our Children, but as Colonies deduced from our own Flesh; yea, rather, our selves made up in other Models. This Loss cannot but go near thee: But tell me, What was the Disposition of the *Son* thou mournest for? If he were graceless and debauch'd, as thy Shame, so thy Sorrow should die with him. Set the Hopes thou might'st have had of his Reclaiming, against the Fears of his continuing and increasing in Wickedness, and thou could'st have made no other present Account, but of Dishonour and Discomfort.

11. **IF** it be sad, that he is taken away in his Wildness; it had been more heavy, had he added

would have added to the Heap of his Sin, and therein to his Torments. If he were Gracious, he hath a better Father than thy self, whose Intrest was more in him, than thine: And if that Heavenly Father have thought good to prefer him to a Crown of Immortal Glory, why should'st thou be afflicted with his Advancement? Why should'st thou not rather rejoyce, that thy Loyns have help'd to furnish Heav'n with a Saint? Were it put to thy Choice, that thy *Son* might be call'd off from his Blessed Rest, and return to his former Earthly Relations; Could'st thou be so injurious in thy Self-Love, as to wish the Misery of so disadvantageous a Change to that Soul; which, as it was never of thy Production, so it were pity it should be at thy disposing? Rather labour to have thine own Soul so disposed, that it may be ready to follow him into those Blessed Mansions, and that it may love and long for Heav'n so much more, as part of thee being There beforehand.

S E C T. IX.

Of Poverty.

1. **T**HOU art driv'n into Want; and that which is worse, out of abundance: Those Evils that we have been inur'd to, as being bred with us from our Cradle, are grown so familiar, that we are little moved with their Presence: But those into which we fall suddenly, out of an outward Felicity of Estate, are ready to over-whelm us. Let thy Care be, not to want those better Riches, which shall make thy Soul happy; and thou shalt not be too much troubled with the Loss of these mean, and perishing Trifles. Had these been true Riches, they could not have been lost: For that Good that is least capable of Loss, as it is unsatisfying in the time of an imperfect and unsure Fruition, so in the losing it turns Evil.

2. DID'ST thou not know, *That Riches have Wings to flie away?* Prov. 23. 5. And what use is there of Wings, if not to flie? If any Man's Violence shall clip those Wings, even this very Clipping is their Flight. Set thy Heart upon that excellent and supreme Wealth, which can never be taken from thee, which shall never
leave

leave thee, nor forsake thee; so thou wilt easily slight these poor Losses. As these were not Goods, so they were not thine: Here thou found'st them, and here thou leav'st them: For the Apostle *Timothy* informs us, 1 Tim. 6. 7. *For we brought nothing into this World; and it is certain, we can carry nothing out.* What had'st thou but their use? Neither can they be otherwise thine Heirs, whom thou leav'st behind thee. I am ashamed, to hear the Heathen *Philosopher* say, All that is mine I carry about me; when many of us Christians are ready to hug those things, which are so transitory.

3. IT was an unanswerable Question, *God* moved to the Rich Man in the Parable, upon the parting with his Soul: *Then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?* Luk. 12. 20. Perhaps a Strangers, or (as in a Case of undisposed Lands) the Occupants, perhaps false Executors, or an Enemies: Call that thine thou art sure to carry away with thee; that may either accompany thy Soul, in its last Passage, or follow it: Such shall be thy Holy Graces, thy Charitable Works, thy Vertuous Actions, and Heavenly Dispositions: These are the Treasures, which thou shalt *Lay up for thy self in Heaven, where neither Moth nor Rust doth Corrupt; and where Thieves do not break through, nor steal,* Matth. 6. 20.

4. THOU hast lost thy Goods: May I not rather say, Thou hast restor'd 'em? He parted with more than thou, that said; *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken,* Job i. 21. Whether

ther it were by way of Patrimony, or by way of Providence and Industry, the *Lord* gave it; and whether it were by the Hands of the *Chaldeans* or *Sabeans*, the *Lord* hath taken it; the *Lord* is in both: He did but give, and take his own. Is it not just so with thee? What Reason hast thou then to complain? Or may I not yet rather say, It was not giv'n, but lent thee for a while, till it were call'd for? And do'st thou grudge to restore what thou borrow'st? Nay, (that thou may'st have yet less Claim to this Talent) was it not only left in thy Hand, by the Owner, to employ for his Use, till he should re-demand it, with the Increase? Thou wert only entrusted to improve, and to account for. If others have taken off thy Charge, whil'st they have impoverish'd, they have eased thee.

5. *THY* Wealth is gone: Hast thou Necessaries left? Be thankful for what thou hast, and forget what thou had'st. Had'st thou had more, thou could'st have made use of no more than Nature calls for; the rest could but have lain by thee, for Sight, and for readiness of Imployment: Do but forbear the Thought of Superfluities, and what art thou the worse? Perhaps thy Fare is courser, thy Dishes fewer, thy Utensils meaner, thy Cloaths homelier, and thy Train shorter; But how is thy Mind affected? Contentment stands not in Quantities, nor in Qualities, but in the inward Disposition of the Heart; that alone can multiply Numbers, and raise Prizes; can turn honest Freezes into rich Velvets, Pulse into Delicates,

licates, and can make one Attendant many Officers.

6. WISE *Seneca* tells thee truly, That the true Mould of Wealth is our Body, as the Last is of the Shooe; if the Shooe be too big for the Foot, it is but troublesom and useles: It is Fitness, that is to be regarded here, not Magnitude: Neither is this any other, than the Charge of the Blessed Apostle; *Having Food and Rayment, let us be there-with content*, 1 Tim. 6. 8. And if we have no more, we shall be but as we were, as we shall be: *For we brought nothing into the World, neither shall we carry any thing out*, 1 Tim. 6. 7.

7. THOU hast parted with thy Wealth; perhaps for thine Advantage: How many have we known, that have been swell'd with Plenty, like as the *Ostrich* or *Bustard* with Bulk of Body, so as they could not raise their Thoughts to Spiritual Things; who when their Weight have been taken off, have mounted nimbly towards Heav'n? How many have we known, that had lost their Lives, if (with the Philosopher) they had not parted with their Gold? and, how many may lose their precious Souls? The whole Vessel had sunk in this boist'rous Sea, if the Cargo of this Earthly Freight had not been cast over-board? And why art thou so troubled to lose that, which might have undone thee in the keeping?

8. THOU had'st Wealth: Hast thou not parted with that, for which many a Man hath been the worse both in Body and Soul; and by which never any Soul was better? Have

we not seen many good Corn-fields spoil'd with Rankness, and many a good Branch split with the Weight of too much Fruit? Whereas those Fields, had they been either thinner sown, or seasonably eaten down, had yielded a fair Crop; and those Boughs, had they been but moderately laden, had out-liv'd many *Autumns*. Do'st thou not hear thy *Saviour* say, *How hardly shall they that have Riches enter into the Kingdom of God?* Matth. 10. 23. Art thou troubled, that there is a Stumbling-block remov'd out of thy way to Happiness? That the Bunch of the *Camel* is taken off, if yet thou wilt pass through the Eye of the Needle?

9. THOU hadst Riches? But hadst thou not Cares attended 'em? Else thou hast fared better than all thy Neighbours. None but thy self could ever handle these Roses, without pricking their Fingers. He was famous amongst the *Jewish Doctors*, whose Rule it was; *He that multiplies Riches, multiplies Cares*: And our Blessed *Saviour* hath coupled these two together. *The Cares of the World, and the Deceitfulness of Riches*, Mark 4. 19. He was noted and envied at *Rome* for his Wealth, which could experimentally say, The Poor Man laughs more often, and more heartily, than the Rich; and tells us, That outward Felicity is an unquiet thing, never ceasing to vex it self. Thy sides are now freed from those Thorns, why do'st thou repine at thine own Ease?

10. THOU lately possessed'st great Riches: But thou may'st rather say, Thou wert possess'd of them? A wise *Roman* truly observed, That many

many a one hath Wealth, as we are apt to say, Such a one has got an Ague, when indeed the Ague hath got him, and holds him with great severity. The Truth is, many a Man's Wealth is his Master, and keeps him under hard Articles, not allowing him sufficient Diet, competent Rest, nor any Recreation: If thou wert thus a Slave to thine Estate, thou art now thine own Man; enjoy thy Liberty, and together with thy *Patience*, be thankful.

11. THOU art very poor: Who made thee so? If thine own Negligence, Laziness, and Improvidence, Prodigality, and rash Engagements; thou hast reason to bear that Burthen, which thou hast pull'd upon thine own Shoulders: and if thou be forc'd to groan under thy Load, yet since thy own Will hath brought upon thee this Necessity, even the same Necessity should move thy Will, to run away as lightly as thou canst, with that pressing Weight: If the Occasion comes by others, *God* will enable thee the more chearfully to flie away with this Cross, because thy own Hand hath not been guilty of imposing it.

12. HOW easie is it for thee, to see *God's* Hand chastising thee by another Mans Sin? And the more to be griev'd at the sin of that others Injuriousness, than at thine own Correction: How dismal a thing it is, for any Christian to see Brethren a Prey to each other? That Neighbours should be like the *Reed*, and the *Brake* set near together, whereof the one starves the other? That we should have daily occasion to renew that woful Comparifon of *Bromiard*, be-

twixt the Friends and Enemies of *Christ*; That *Jews* don't suffer *Beggars*, and that *Christians* make them?

13. IN the mean time, if *God* think fit to send Poverty to thy Door, by the Message of Men, bid it welcom for the sake of Him that sent it, and entertain it not grudgingly for its own sake; for if it be well us'd, 'twill repay thee with many Blessings; as those of quiet Rest, safe Security, humble *Patience*, contented Humility, and contemptuous Valuation of these Earthly Things! All which had absented thy House in a Prosperous Condition.

14. THOU art depriv'd of thy former Conveniences, as Diet, Lodging, and Attendance. How many have purposely affected that out of Choice, which is befalln thee upon Necessity? Some out of the Grounds of *Philosophy*, others of *Religion*? *Attalus*, the Philosopher, might have lain soft; yet he calls for, and praises the Bed and Pillow, that will not yield to his Body: And *Nero's* great and rich Master, brags of his usual dining without a Table. What should I tell then of the *Pharisees* uneasie Couches, and penal Garments; of the Mats of the Elect *Manichees*; and of the austere Usages of the antient *Eremitical* Christians, their rigorous Abstinences, their affamishing Meals, nightly Watchings, cold Ground-lyings, and sharp Disciplines? Thou art in Ease and Splendor, in comparison of these, who voluntarily impos'd upon 'em these Severities, which thou wouldst be loath to undergo from others Cruelty. It was a strange word of *Epicurus*, not favouring
of

of more Contentment, than Presumption; *Give me but Water, with Barley-Meal, and I shall vie with Jupiter himself for Happiness.* And if this *Ethnick*, who had an ill Name for Affectation of Pleasure, could rest so well contented with a poor Mess of this Composition; What a shame is it for us Christians, not to think our selves well satisfy'd with a much larger (though but homely) Provision?

SECT.

S E C T. X.

Of Confinement.

1. **T**HOU art restrain'd of thy Liberty:
I cannot blame thee to be sensible of
the Affliction. Liberty uses to hold
competition for Dearness, with Life it self:
And how many have lost their Lives, to pur-
chase their Liberty? But take care thou art
not found guilty of thine own Complaint? For
certainly, thou canst not be depriv'd of thy
Liberty, except thou wilt: Liberty is a Pri-
vilege of the Will; Will is a Sovereign Pow-
er, that is not subject either to Restraint, or Con-
straint:

2. **H**A S T thou therefore a Freedom to thine
own Thoughts? It is not the Inclosing of these
outward Parts, that can make thee a Prisoner:
Thou art not worthy the Name of a Man, if
thou think'st this Body to be thy self; which
Human Power can reach to. Art thou a Chri-
stian? Thou hast learn'd to submit thy Will to
God's; and his Divine Will is declared in his
Actions: For what He doth, that He wills to
do; and if his Will be to have thee Restrain'd,
why should it not be thine? And if it be thy
desire to be Confin'd, what do'st thou complain
for want of Liberty?

3. **T**HOU

3. THOU art Restrain'd: And is it such a piece of Injustice, that thou art depriv'd from ranging abroad? How ill hast thou improv'd thy Time, if thou hast not laid up enough both of Employment and Contentment in thine own Bosom? What great Pleasure canst thou enjoy, to look into the World, and to behold those Objects of Contentions, and horrid Actions, thine Eye shall there meet withal; which thy Closeness frees thee from being a Spectator: The very Thought whereof, is enough to make a Man miserable: And instead of them, thou art presented only with the Face of thy Keeper; which Custom and Necessity hath made more easie to thee.

4. THOU art immur'd close within Stone-Walls, and all Company is seclused from thee: But content thy self; *God*, and his Holy Angels cannot be kept out: thou hast better Company in thy Solitude, than thy Liberty afforded thee: The Jollity of thy Freedom rob'd thee of the Conversation of these Spiritual Comforts, which only can render thee happy: They which before were Strangers to thee, are now thy Guests, and thy Inmates, (if the Fault be not thine) to dwell with thee in this forc'd Retiredness. What if the Light be shut out from thee? It cannot hinder thee from seeing the Invisible. *The Darknes hideth not from thee, (saith the Psalmist) but the Night shineth as the Day; the Darknes, and the Light, are both alike to thee, Psal. 139. 12.*

5. I may say, without Dubiousness, *God* hath never been so evidently seen, as in the darkest
Dun-

Dungeons; for the outward Light of Prosperity distracts our Visive Beams, which are strongly contracted in a deep Obscurity: He must descend low, and be in darkness, that would see the Glorious Lights of Heav'n by Day. They ever shine, but are not seen except in the Night: If thine Eyes be blessed with this invisible Prospect, thou art exempted from envying those Persons, though they could see all that the Tempter represented to the View of our *Saviour*, upon the highest Mountain; *All the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them.*

6. THOU art forced to Retir'dness: but with what Disposition both of Mind and Body? If thou hadst an unquiet, and burden'd Soul, it were not the open and free Air, that could refresh thee; and if thou have a clear and light Heart, it is not a strict Closeness that can dismay thee: Thy Thoughts can keep thee Company, and chear up thy Solitariness. If thou hadst an unsound and painful Body, afflicted with the Gout, Rupture, or Luxation of some Limb, thou would'st not complain of thy Retir'dness; thy Pain would make thee insensible of the Trouble of thy Confinement: But if *God* have blessed thee with Health of Body, how easily may'st thou digest an harmless Limitation?

7. A Wise Man (as *Laurentius* the Presbyter observ'd well) doth much in Solitude: So mayst thou employ the Hours of thy close Retir'dness, and bless *God* for so happy an Opportunity. How memorable an Instance hath our
Age

Age afforded us, of an Eminent Person, to whose Learning we are all oblig'd for that noble *History of the World*, now in our Hands? The Court had his Youthful Years, and the Tower his latter Age; the Tower reformed the Court in him, and produc'd these worthy Monuments of Art and Industry, which we should have in vain expected from his Freedom and Jollity. It is observ'd, that shining Wood, when it is kept within Doors loseth its Light: It is otherwise with this, and many other active Wits; which had never shin'd so much, if not for Confinement

Sir Walter
Raleigh,

8. THOU art close shut up: I have seen *Anchorets*, that have sued for this as a Favour, which thou esteamest a Punishment; and having obtain'd it, have plac'd Merit in that wherein thou apprehend'st Misery. Our *History* tells us of one, who when the Church, where-to his Cell was annexed, was on fire, would not come out to live; but would die, and lie buried under the Ashes of that Roof where his Vow had fixt him.

9. THOU art imprison'd: Wise Men are apt, in all Actions and Events, to enquire still into the Causes: Wherefore do'st thou suffer? Is it for thy own Guiltiness? Make thy Goal God's Correction-House, for the reforming of thy Wickedness. Remember and imitate *Manasses*, the evil Son of a good Father; who upon true Humiliation, by his just Imprisonment, found an happy Expiation of his horrible Idolatries, Murders, and Witchcrafts; whose Bonds brought him home to God, and himself. Is it for Debt?
Think

Think not to pay those who have intrusted thee with a ling'ring Durance, if there be Power in thine hands for a Discharge: There is Fraud and Injustice in this Closeness: Fear thou a worse Prison, if thou wilt needs wilfully live, and die in a just Indebtment, when thou may'st be at once Free, and Honest.

10. **STRETCH** thine Ability to the utmost, to satisfy others with thine own Impoverishing: But if the Hand of *God* have humbled and disabled thee, labour what thou canst to make thy Peace with thy Creditors: If they will needs be cruel, look up with *Patience* to the Hand of that *God*, who thinks fit to afflict thee with their unreasonableness; and make the same good use of thy Sufferings, which thou wouldst do from the Immediate Hand of thy Creator. If it be for a good Cause, rejoyce in this Tribulation, and be holily proud and glad, with the Blessed Apostles, that thou art *Counted worthy to suffer shame and bonds for the Name of the Lord Jesus*, Act. 5. 41. For every just Cause is His: neither is he less a Martyr, that suffers for his Conscience in any of *God's* Commandments, than he who suffers for matter of Faith and Religion.

11. **REMEMBER** that Cordial Word of thy Saviour: *Blessed are they that are persecuted for Righteousness sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matth. 5. 10. In such a Prison thou shalt be sure to find good Company; as *Joseph, Micahiah, Jeremiah, John Baptist, Peter, Paul, and Silas*; and all the Holy Martyrs and Confessors of *Jesus Christ*, from the first Plantation of the Gospel to this present Day. Repent thee, if thou canst,

can't, to be thus accompanied ; and choose rather to violate a good Conscience, and be free, than to keep it under a Momentary Restraint.

12. THOU art a Prisoner : Make the best of thy Condition : Close Air is warmer than open ; and how commonly do we hear *Birds* sing sweeter Notes in their Cages, than they do in the Woods ? It will be thy own Defect, if thou art not amended by thy Retir'dness. Thou art a Prisoner : So is thy Soul in thy Body ; there not restrain'd only, but fetter'd ; yet complains not of the straitness of these Clay-Walls, or the weight of these Bonds ; but *patiently* waits for a happy Goal-delivery : So do thou attend with all Long-suffering, the good Hour of the Pleasure of thy *God* : Thy Period is set, not without a regard to thy Benefit, but to thy chiefest Advantage : He, in whose Hand are all Times, will find, and hath determin'd a fit time to free thy Body from these outward Prison-Walls, and thy Soul from this Prison of thy Body ; and to restore both Body and Soul *from the Bondage of Corruption, to the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God*, Rom. 8. 21.

SECT.

S E C T. XI.

In Exile.

1. **T**HOU art banish't from thy Country: Beware lest in thy Complaining, thou censure thy self. A wise Man's Country is every where. What relation hath the Place wherein thou wert born, to thy present Being; any more than the Time wherein thou wert there? What Reason hast thou to be more addicted to the *Region* where thou drew'st thy first Breath, than to the Day of the Week, or Hour of the Day in which thou salutedst the Light? What are Times and Places of our Birth, but unconcerning Circumstances? Wherever thou enjoy'st thy self, thou mayst either find or make that thy Country.

2. **B**UT thou say'st; There is a certain secret Property in our Native Soyl, that draws our Affection, and weds our Hearts to it, not without a pleasing kind of Delight; whereof no Reason can be granted, so as we affect the Place, not because it is better than others, but because it is our own: *Ulysses* doth no less value the Rocky Soyl of his hard and barren *Ithaca*, than *Agamemnon* doth the noble Walls of his rich and pleasant *Mycena*. I grant this Relation hath
so

so powerful an Influence upon our Hearts naturally, as is pretended ; yet such a one as is easily check'd with a small unkindness: How many have we known, who upon an actual Affront (not of the greatest) have diverted their Respects from their Native Country, and out of a strong Alienation of Mind have turn'd their Love into Hostility ?

3. WE shall not need to seek far for Histories, our Times and Memories will furnish us too well: Do we not see those, who have suck'd the Breasts of our common Mother, upon a little dislike, to have spit in her Face? Can we not name some of our home-bred Compatriots, who upon the dislike of some displeasing Laws, have flown off from their Country, and suborn'd Treasons, and incited Forreign Princes to our Invasion? That have endeavour'd to subvert the Government, and to extirpate that Religion which is Establish'd amongst us; and to set up a piece of Pageantry of their own? So as thou seest, this Natural Affection is not so ardent in many, but that it may be quench'd with a mean Discontentment. If therefore there were no other ground of thine Affliction, thy Sorrow is not so deep-rooted, but that it may easily be pluck'd up.

4. IT is not the Air or Earth, that thou
infixt upon; it is the Company, thou say'st,
from which it is a kind of Death to part: I
shall leave all Acquaintance and Conversation;
and be cast upon strange Faces, and Languages
that I understand not: My best Entertainment
will be Solitude, my Ordinary, Inhospitallity.

What do'st thou perplex thy self with these needless Terrors? He is not worthy of the Name of a *Philosopher*, much less of a Christian, that hath not attain'd to be absolute in himself; and which way soever he is cast, to stand upon his own Bottom; and that if there were no other Men left in the World, could not tell how to enjoy himself: It is that within us, whereby we must live, and be happy: Some Additions of Complacency may come from without: Sociable Natures seek and find Pleasure in Conversation; but if that be deny'd, sanctify'd Spirits know how to converse comfortably with *God*, and Themselves.

5. HOW many Holy Ones of old have purposely with-drawn themselves from the Company of Men, that they might be blessed with an invisible Society; that have exchange'd Cities for Deserts, Houses for Caves, the Sight of Men for Beasts; that their Spiritual Eyes might be fixed upon those better Objects, which the Frequency of the World held from them? Necessity doth but put thee into that Estate, which their Piety affected. But to be driven to forsake Parents, Kinsfolk, Friends, how sad a Case must it needs be? What is this else, but a perfect Distraction? What are we, but Offsprings of our Parents? What are Friends, but dear to us? And what is all the World to us, without these Comforts?

6. WHEN thou hast said all; what is be-faln thee more, than it pleased *God* to enjoin the Father of the Faithful? *Get thee out of thy Country, and from thy Kindred, and from thy Fa-thers*

thens House, into a Land that I will shew thee, Gen. 13. 1. The same *God*, by the Command of Authority, calls thee to this Secession: If thou wilt shew thy self worthy to be the Son of such a Father, do that in an humble Obedience to *God*, which thou art urg'd to do by the Compulsion of Men.

7. BUT is this so vexatious a Case? Do'st thou think to find *God* where thou goest? Do'st thou make full Account of his Company both all along the Way, and in the End of thy Journey? Hath He not said, who cannot fail; *I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee?* Certainly, he is not worthy to lay any Claim to a *God*, that cannot find Parents, Kindred, and Friends in Him alone: Besides, He that of very *Stones could raise up Children unto Abraham*; How easily can He of Inhospitable Men, raise up Friends to the Sons of *Abraham*? Only labour thou to inherit that Faith wherein he walked; that alone shall free *Denizen* thee in the best of Forreign States, and shall entertain thee in the Wildest Deserts.

8. THOU art cast upon a Forreign Nation: Be of good Chear: We know that *Flowers* remov'd, grow greater; and some *Plants*, which were but unthriving and unwholsom in their own Soyl, have grown both safe and flourishing in other Climates. Had *Joseph* been ever so great, if he had not been transplanted into *Egypt*? Had *Daniel*, and his three Companions of the Captivity ever attain'd to that Honour in their Native Land? How many have we known, that have found that Health, in a Change of Air,

which they could not meet with at Home? In *Africa*, the South-Wind clears up; and the North is rainy. Look thou up still to that Hand, which hath translated thee; wait his good Pleasure: Be thou no Stranger to thy *God*; it matters not who are Strangers unto thee.

9. THOU art a banish't Man: How canst thou be so, when thou tread'st upon thy Fathers Ground? *The Earth is the Lord's, and the Fulness thereof; the World, and they that dwell therein*, Psal. 24. 1. In his Right, where-ever thou art, thou may'st challenge a Spiritual Interest: *All things*, saith the Apostle, *are yours; and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's*, 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22, 23. No Man can challenge thee for a Stranger, that is not thy Father's Child.

10. THINE Exile separates thee from thy Friends: This were no small Affliction, if it might not in a great measure be remedied. That was a true Word of *Laurentius*, That where two Faithful Friends are met, *God* makes up a Third: But it is no less true, that where one Faithful Spirit is, there *God* makes up a Second: One *God* can more than supply a thousand Friends.

11. THY Banishment deprives thee of the Comfort of thy wonted Companions: Would not a voluntary Travel do as much? Do'st thou not see thousands, that do willingly for many Years, change their Country for Forreign Regions; taking long Farewells of their dearest Friends and Acquaintance; some out of Curiosity, some out of a thirst after Knowledge, and some out of a Covetous desire after Gain? What Difference is there betwixt Thee and Them, but that

that their Travel is voluntary, thy Exile constrain'd? And who are these thou art so sorry to part with? Remember what *Crates* the Philosopher said to a Young Man, that was beset with Parasitical Friends: Young Man, said he, I pity thy Solitude: Perhaps, thou may'st be more alone in such Society, than in the Wilderness: Such Conversation is better lost, than continued. If thou canst but get to be well acquainted with thy self, thou shalt be sorry that thou wert no sooner solitary.

12. THOU art out of thy Country: Who is not so? We are all *Pilgrims* together with thee, 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. *Heb.* 11. 13. *Whil'st we are at home in the Body, we are absent from the Lord,* 2 *Cor.* 5. 6. Miserable are we, if our true Home be not Above: That is the *Better Country* which we seek, even an *Heavenly*, *Heb.* 11. 16. And thither thou may'st equally direct thy Course in whatsoever *Region*. This Center of Earth is equidistant from the Glorious Circumference of Heaven: If we may once meet there, what need we make such Difference in the way?

S E C T. XII.

Of Blindness and Deafness.

I. **T**HOU hast lost thine Eyes ; a Loss, which all the World is incapable to repair ; and thou art condemn'd to a perpetual Darkness : *For, the Light of the Body is the Eye ; and if the Light that is in thee be Darkness, how great is that Darkness ?* Matth. 6. 22, 23. Could'st thou have foreseen this Evil, thou hadst anticipated this Loss, by weeping out those Eyes for Grief, which now thou art destitute of. There are but two Senses, by which any outward Comfort can have free access to thy Soul ; *Seeing, and Hearing.* One of 'em is now extinguish't for ever : Yet thou hast two inward Eyes, that can abundantly supply the want of thy outward ; the Eye of Reason, and the Eye of Faith : The One as a Man, the Other as a Christian. Answerable whereunto there is a double Light apprehended by 'em ; Rational, and Divine.

2. **S O L O M O N** tells thee of the One ; *Prov. 20. 27. The Spirit of Man is the Candle of the Lord, searching all the Inward Parts of the Belly.* The Beloved Disciple tells thee of the Other ; *1 Joh. 1. 5, 7. God is Light, and in Him is no Dark-*

Darkness; and we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light. Now these two Lights do so far exceed that outward and visible One, of which thou art depriv'd, as Light doth Darkness: If therefore by the Eye of Reason thou do'st attain to the clear Sight of intelligible Things; and by the Eye of Faith, to the Sight of things Supernatural and Divine; the Improvement of these better Eyes, will make a large amends for the want of thy Natural Ones.

3. **THY** Sight is lost : Let me tell thee what *Antony the Hermite* (whom *Ruffinus* is not dubious in stiling Blessed) said to learned *Didymus of Alexandria*, that was Blind ; Let it not trouble thee, O *Didymus*, that thou art bereft of thy Carnal Eyes ; for thou lackest only those Eyes, which *Mice*, and *Flyes*, and *Lyzards* have : But rejoyce that thou hast those Eyes, which the *Angels* have, whereby they see God, and by which thou art enlightned with a great measure of Knowledge. Endeavour to perfect this in thy self, and thou shalt not be too much discomforted with the absence of them.

4. THINE Eyes are lost ; and the chief Comfort of thy Life is gone with them : *The Light is sweet, saith Solomon ; and a pleasant thing it is, for the Eyes to behold the Sun, Eccles. 11. 7.* Hath not God done this purposely, that He might take thee off from all Earthly Objects, that thou might'st so much the more intently fix thy self upon Him, and seek after those Spiritual Comforts, which are to be found in a better Light ? The Sun is the most Glorious Thing, that thy Eyes can possibly see ; but thy

Spiritual Ones may behold Him, that made that Glorious Luminary ; who is infinitely more Glorious, than what He made. If thou hast now an Inspection into Him more than thou had'st, that which thou counted'st thy chiefest Loss, hath provid thy greatest Gain.

5. THOU art become Blind ; and certainly, it is a sore Affliction. The Men of *Jabesh-Gilead* offer'd the Tyrant of the *Ammonites*, so far as to serve him, 1 *Sam.* 11. 1. but when he requir'd the Loss of their *Right Eyes*, as a Condition of their Peace, they will rather hazard their Lives in an unequal War ; as if Servitude and Death were a less Mischief, than one Eye's loss : How much more of both ? For though one Eye be but *Testis Singularis* ; yet the Evidence of that is as true, as that of both : in some Causes, more : For when we would take a perfect Aim, we shut one Eye, as being rather an hind'rance to an accurate Perspective : Yet for ordinary use, we value each of these Lights, that there is no Wise Man, but would rather lose a Limb than one of them.

6. ALTHOUGH I could tell thee of a certain Man, not less Religious than Witty, who when his Friends bewail'd the Loss of one of his Eyes, ask't them, Whether they wept for the Eye which he had lost, or the Eye which remain'd ? Weep rather, said he, for the Enemy that stays behind, than for the Enemy that is gone. This Man look't upon his Sight, with Eyes different from other Mens ; he look't upon 'em as Enemies, which others beheld as officious

officious Servants, good Friends, and dear Favourites.

7. INDEED, they are any, or all of these, according as they are us'd: Good Servants, if they go faithfully on their Errands, and return us true Intelligence: Good Friends, if they advise and invite us to Holy Thoughts: But Enemies, if they suggest to us Evil. If thine Eyes have been employ'd in these evil Offices to thy Soul, *God* hath done that for thee, which He hath in a Figurative Sense, enjoyn'd thee to do to thy self: *Matth. 5. 29. If thy Right Eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is better for thee that one of thy Members should perish, and not that thy whole Body should be cast into Hell.*

8. THOU hast lost thine Eyes, and with 'em much Earthly Contentment: But thou art hereby freed of many Temptations; for those were the In-lets of Sin, and busy Agents in the Admission of it; the very Panders of Lust, for the debauching of the Soul. How many thousands are there, who on their Death-Beds, upon the sad recalling of their guilty Thoughts, have wish'd they had been born Blind? So as thy Joy is less, thou shalt sin less; neither shall any vain Objects take away thy Thoughts from the serious Meditation of Spiritual Things.

9. BEFORE it was no otherwise with thee, than the Prophet *Jeremiah* reports it to have been with the *Jews*; *That Death is come up by the Windows,* *Jer. 9. 21.* And our great Grand-Mother *Eve*; *She saw the Tree was pleasant to the Eyes, and thereupon took of the Fruit,* *Gen. 3. 6.*
And

And it hath been so ever since, with all the Fruit of her Womb, both in the Old, and Latter World: *The Sons of God saw the Daughters of Men, that they were fair, and they took them Wives of all which they chose*, Gen. 6. 2. Inſomuch as not filthy Luſts only, but even Adulteries take up their Lodgings: The Bleſſed Apoſtle mentions it; 2 Pet. 2. 14. *Having Eyes* (ſaith he) *full of Adultery, and that cannot ceaſe from Sin.* Whilſt thine Heart walked after thine Eyes, as Job ſpeaks, Job 31. 7. it could do no leſs, but *Carry thee down to the Chambers of Death*, Prov. 2. 27. Thou art now deliver'd from that danger of ſo deadly a Miſguidance.

10. HATH not the Loſs of thine Eyes, withal, freed thee of a World of Sorrows? Hadſt thou but ſeen what others are forc'd to behold, thoſe fearful Conflagrations, thoſe Savage Violences, and Sacrilegious Outrages, thine Heart could not chooſe but bleed within thee: Now thou art affected with 'em only at a diſtance, as receiving 'em by the imperfect Intelligence of thine Ear from the unfeeling Relation of others.

11. THINE Eyes are loſt; What need thy Heart to go with 'em? Old *Iſaac* was dark-ſighted, when he gave the Bleſſing (contrary to his own Intentions) to his Son *Jacob*; yet it ſeems, he liv'd forty Years after, and could be pleaſed then to have good Proviſion made him with *Wine and Veniſon*, Gen. 27. 25. Our Life doth not lie in our Eyes; *The Spirit of Man is that, which upholds his Infirmities*, Prov. 18. 14. Labour to raiſe thy ſelf to a chearful Diſpoſition; and
in

in thy Bodily Darknes, *There shall be Light, and Joy to thy Soul*, Est. 8. 16.

12. HATH God taken away thy Sight? But hath He not given thee an abundant Supply in other Faculties? Are not thine inward Senses the more quick, thy Memory stronger, thy Fancy more active, and thy Understanding more apprehensive? The Wonders that we have heard, and read of blind Men's Memories, were not easie to believe, if it were not obvious to conceive, that the Removal of all Distractions gives them an Opportunity both of a careful Reposition of all desired Objects, and of a sure Fixeness of 'em where they are laid. Hence have we seen it come to pass, that some Blind Men have attain'd to those Perfections, which their Eyes could never have endu'd 'em with.

13. IT is very memorable, that our Ecclesiastical Story reports of *Didymus of Alexandria*; who being Blind from his Infancy, through his Prayers, and diligent Endeavours, reach't unto such an high pitch of Knowledge in *Logick, Arithmetick, and Astronomy*, as was admir'd by the Learned Masters of those Arts; and for his rare insight into *Divinity*, was by great *St. Athanasius* approv'd to be the Doctor of the Chair in that Famous Church. What need we doubt the Truth of it, when our late Times have so clearly seconded it? Having yielded divers worthy Divines, which have been depriv'd of their Sight.

14. THERE was One very eminent in the University of *Cambridge*, of great Skill in Tongues and Arts,

Mr. Fisher of Trinity-College.

and

and of singular Acuteness of Judgment. It is somewhat strange, that *Snidas* reports of *Neoclides*, That being blind, he could steal more cunningly than any that had use of Eyes: I may as boldly say of Mr. *Fisher*, That he was more dextrous in picking the Locks of difficult Authors, and fetching forth their Treasures of their hidden Secrets, than those that had the sharpest Eyes about 'em; inasmuch as it was noted, those were singular Proficients, which employ'd themselves in reading to him: If they read Books to him, he reads Lectures the while to them; and taught 'em more than he learn'd himself.

15. AS for the other outward Senses, they are commonly more exquisite in the Blind: We read of some, who have been of so accurate a Touch, that by their very feeling they could distinguish betwixt Black and White: And for

Lord Bacon's Natural History.

the Ear, as our Philosophers observe, that Sounds are sweeter to the Blind, than to the Sighted, being more curiously judg'd by 'em: But the most perfect Recompence of these Natural Eyes, is in the Exaltation of our Spiritual Ones. We are more enlightned towards the Beatifical Vision of *God*, as they apprehend more Darkness in all Earthly Objects: Thou wilt not miss the Loss of thy Sight, if thou find'st thy Soul thus happily Enlightned.

16. THINE Eyes are lost: It is a Blessing, that once thou had'st 'em: Had'st thou been born Blind, what a Stranger would'st thou have

have been to *God*, and the World? Had'st thou not once seen the Face of Heav'n, Earth, and Sea, what Expressions could have made this sufficiently apprehensive of the wonderful Works of thy Creator? Not any Discourse could have made thee to understand what Light is? The Sun the Fountain of it, the Heavens the Glorious Region of it, and the Moon and Stars illuminated by it? How could'st thou have had thy Thoughts raised so high, as to give Glory to that Great *God*, whose Infinite Power hath wrought all these marvellous things?

17. NO doubt, *God* hath his own ways of Mercy for those that are born Blind; not requiring what He hath not giv'n; supplying by his Spirit in the Inward Vessels, what is wanting in the Outward: So as even those that could never see the Face of the World, shall see the Face of *God* that made it: But in an ordinary Course of proceeding, those which have been Blind from their Birth, must needs want those Helps of knowing, and glorifying *God* in his mighty Works, which lie open to the Sight: These once fill'd thine Eyes, and remain with thee after they have forsaken thee.

18. WHAT should'st thou do, but walk on in the Strength of those fixed Thoughts; always adoring the Majesty of that *God*, whom thy Sight hath represented to thee so Glorious; and in an humble Submission to his Plesure, strive against all the Discomforts of thy Sufferings. Our Story tells us of a valiant Souldier *Polyzelus*, who after his Eyes were shot out in the Battle, covering his Face with his Target, fought

fought still, laying about him as vehemently, as if he had receiv'd no hurt: Strive to imitate this Courage; and let not the Loss of thine Eyes hinder thee from a chearful Resistance of those Spiritual Enemies, which labour to draw thee into an impatient Murmuring against *God*: But wait humbly upon Him, who hath better Eyes in store for thee, than those thou hast lost.

19. THOU hast lost thy Hearing: It is not easie to determine, which Loss is the greatest; the Eye, or the Ear: both are afflictive. Now all the World is to thee dumb, since thou art deaf to it: and how small a matter hath made thee a meer Cypher amongst Men? These are the Senses of Instruction; and there is no other way for Intelligence to be convey'd to the Soul, whether in Secular, or in Spiritual Affairs. The Eye is the Window, the Ear is the Door, by which all Knowledge enters: In matter of Observation, by the Eye; and in matter of *Faith*, by the *Ear*, *Rom.* 10. 17.

20. HAD it pleas'd *God* to shut up both these Senses from thy Birth, thy State had been utterly disconsolate, and there had been no possible Access for Comfort to thy Soul. Had this Affliction happen'd in thy riper Age, there had been no way, but to have been content with thy former Store: But now He hath vouchsafed to leave thee one Passage open, it behoves thee to supply one Sense by the other; and to let in those Helps by the Window, which are deny'd Entrance at the Door. But now the *Almighty* hath pleas'd to lend thee an Ear so long,
till

till thou hast laid the sure Grounds of Faith in thy Heart, thou may'st work upon 'em in this silent Opportunity, with Heav'nly Meditations, and raise 'em up to no less height, than thou could'st have done by thy quickest Hearing.

21. IT is a great Blessing, that in the Fulness of thy Senses, thou wert careful to improve thy Bosom, as a Magazine of Heav'nly Thoughts, providing with the Wise *Patriarch*, for the seven Years of Dearth: Now that the Passages are thus blocked up, thou could'st not but have been in danger of Famishing. Thou hast now abundant Leisure to recal, and ruminate upon those Counsels; which thy Improvement hath laid up in thy Heart, and to thy happy Advantage find'st the Difference betwixt a wise Providence, and a careless Neglect.

22. THINE outward Hearing is gone: But thou hast an inward Ear, whereby thou hear'st the secret Motions of God's Spirit, which shall never be lost. How many thousands whom thou envyest, are in a worse Condition? They have an outward Ear, whereby they hear the Voice of Men; but they want that Spiritual Ear, which perceives the least whisperings of the Holy Ghost: Ears they have, but not hearing Ones: for Fashion, more than Use. Wise *Solomon* makes, and observes the Distinction; *Prov. 20. 12. The hearing Ear, and the seeing Eye, the Lord hath made even both of them:* And a Greater than *Solomon* can say of His formal Auditors; *Hearing, they hear not, Matth. 13. 13.* If thou have an Ear for God, though deaf to Men; How much happier art thou, than

than those Millions of Men, that have an Ear for Men, and are deaf to *God*.

23. THOU hast lost thy Hearing; and there-with no small deal of Sorrow: How would it grieve thy Soul, to hear those woful Ejaculations, pitiful Complaints, hideous Blasphemies, mad Paradoxes, and Hellish Heresies, where-with thine Ear would have been wounded, had it not been barr'd against their Entrance? It is thy just Grief, that thou missest the hearing of many Good Words; it is thy Happiness, that thou art freed from the hearing of many Evil. It is an even Lay betwixt the benefit of hearing Good, and the torment of hearing Evil.

SECT.

S E C T. XIII.

Of Sterility.

1. **T**HOU complain'st of dry Loyns, and a barren Womb; as Father *Abraham* did before thee: *What wilt thou give me, seeing I go Childless?* Gen. 15. 2. And the Wife of *Israel* made the same Complaints; Gen. 30. 1. *Give me Children, or else I die.* So desirous hath Nature been, to propagate it self, and so impatient of a Denial: *Lo, Children and the Fruit of the Womb, are an Heritage, and Gift that cometh from the Lord: Happy is He that hath his Quiver full of such Shafts,* Psal. 127. 4, 6. It is a Blessing, that *David* grudg'd to Wicked Ones, Psal. 17. 4. *They have Children at their Desire.*

2. **I**T was the Curse which God inflicted upon the Family of *Abimelech* King of *Gerar*, in Closing up all the Wombs in his House, for *Sarah's* sake, Gen. 20. 17, 18. The Judgment threatned to *Ephraim*, is a miscarrying Womb, and dry Brests, Hos. 9. 14. And *Jehoniah's* Doom is, Jer. 22. 30. *Write this Man, Childless.* As on the contrary, it is a special Favour of God, *That the Barren hath born seven,* 1 Sam. 2. 5. And it is noted by the *Psalmist*, as a Wonder of God's Mercy, Psal. 113. 8. *that He makes the Barren Wo-*

man to keep House, and to be a joyful Mother of Children.

3. IT is pity he was born, that holds not Children a Blessing. She hath a double Favour from *God*, that is a Joyful Mother of Children: Many a one breeds her Sorrow, and Death: And there is scarce any other Blessing from *God*, season'd with so much Acrimony of Misery and Danger. Do but compare one Pain with another, and consider the Anxious Cares that do attend 'em; and tell me, whether thy bemoan'd Sterility enjoys not more Ease, and less Sorrow?

4. IT is thy Sorrow that thou art not Fruitful: Consider thou art freed from a greater Affliction. *In Sorrow shalt thou bring forth Children*, Gen. 3. 16. Think on the Shrieks thou hast heard in the Painful Travels of thy Neighbors; wearying the Days and Nights in restless Pangs, and calling for Death in a despair of Delivery: And after the unprofitable Labours of Midwives, have made use of another Sex; so deliver'd of her Life and Birth together. All these Sorrows thou hast escap'd by this one: In these Regards, how many whom thou enviest, have thought thee Happier than themselves?

5. THOU art afflicted thou art not a Mother: Many a one is so, that wishes they had been Barren. If Children prove deform'd and mis-shapen; or, upon further Growth, unnatural and wicked; What a Corrosive is this to the Parents? *Rebecca* thought it long to be after her Marriage, twenty Years Childless; her Husband, at sixty Years, prays to *God* for Issue,
Gen.

Gen. 25. 20, 21. his Devotion (as the *Jewish Doctors* say) carried him to Mount *Moriah* for this purpose; that in the same Place where his Life was miraculously preserv'd from the Knife of his Father, it might by the like Miracle, be renew'd in his Posterity.

6. *GOD* hears him; *Rebecca* Conceive: But when she felt that early Combat of her struggling Twins, she can say; *If it be so, why am I thus?* *Gen. 25. 22.* And when she saw a Child come forth, *Red all over like an hairy Garment,* *Gen. 25. 25.* and after saw his Conditions no less rough than his Hide, *Gen. 27. 41.* do we not think she wish'd that part of her Burden unborn? Certainly, Children are either Blessings, or Crosses. Hast thou a Child well dispos'd, well govern'd? *A wise Son maketh a glad Father,* *Prov. 10. 1.* *Prov. 19. 13.* Hast thou a Child disorderly and debauch'd? *A foolish Son is the Heaviness of his Mother, and the Calamity of his Father,* *Prov. 10. 1.* *Chap. 19. 13.* Hast thou a Son that is unruly, stubborn, and unnatural? Then *Solomon* tells us; *He that wasteth his Father, and chaseth away his Mother, is a Son that causeth Shame, and bringeth Reproach,* *Prov. 19. 26.* And if such a Son should live and die impenitent, what can be answerable to the Discomfort of that Parent?

7. *THOU* hast no Children: As thou hast less Joy, thou hast less Trouble. It is a continual Care, that belongs to these living Possessions. *Artimedorus* observes, That to dream of Children, imports Cares to follow. As they

Artimedorus de insomniis, Lib. 1. Chap. 6.

are our greatest Cares, they bring many lesser Ones. Before thou hadst but one Mouth to feed, now many; and 'tis thy Duty to provide for 'em: For, *If any provide not for his own, especially for those of his own House, he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel,* 1 Tim. 5. 8.

8. DOST thou not see many *Rivulets* let out from the main *Channel*, leave the *Stream* shallow? So must it be with thee; for this Expence is not more necessary, than comfortable. I remember a great Man that visited a Gentleman in the *Country*, and seeing all his Children standing in the Order of their Age, and Stature, said, These are them that make Rich men Poor: But immediately he receiv'd this Answer; Nay, my *Lord*, these are they that make a Poor man Rich: for there is not one of these, whom I would part with for all your Wealth.

9. INDEED, we receive but to distribute, and are but the *Farmers* of those we leave behind. If we do freely lay out of our Substance before-hand, so much of our Rent is happily clear'd. It is easie to observe, that none are so Covetous, as the Childless: Whereas those who for maintenance of large Families, are inur'd to frequent Disbursements, find such Experience of Divine Providence in the Prudent managing of Affairs, that they lay out with more Chearfulness, then they receive: VVherein their Care must needs be abated, when *God* takes it from 'em to Himself.

10. AND if they be not wanting to themselves, their Faith gives them Ease, in casting
their

their Burden upon Him, who hath more Power, and Right to it, since our Children are more His, than our own. He that feedeth the *Young Ravens*, *Psal. 147. 9.* can he fail the best of his Creatures? A worthy Divine tells us of a Gentlewoman, coming to the Cottage of a poor Neighbour, and seeing it furnish'd with store of Children, could say; *Here are the Mouths, but where is the Meat?* But not long after she was answer'd to that Question; for the poor Woman coming to her after the Burial of her last Child, inverted the Question upon her; *Here is the Meat, but where is the Mouths?*

11. SURELY, the Great Governour of the World, whose Charge we are, will never leave any of his Menials without the Bread of Sufficiency; and who are so fit to be his Purveyors, as Parents for their Children? Nature hath taught the very *Birds*, to pick out the best of their Grains for their Young: Nature sends that Moisture out of the Root, which gives Life to the Branches, and Blossoms: Sometimes, indeed, it meets with a kind Retaliation; some Stork-like Disposition repairs the loving Offices done by the Parents, in a dutiful Retribution to their Age or Necessity.

12. BUT how often have we seen the contrary? Here an unsatiable Importunity of drawing from the Parent that Maintenance, which is more than necessary for his Subsistence: Sometimes an undutiful and unnatural Neglect, in not owning the Meanness of their Parents, or in not supporting the Weakness of their decay'd Estate by due Maintenance. Ingratitude is odious

ous in any Man ; but in a Child, monstrous.

13. IT is thy Grief thou never hadst a Child : Believe him that hath tried it, there is not so much Comfort in the having of Children, as there is Sorrow in parting with 'em ; especially when their Parts, and Disposition have raised our Hopes, and doubled our Affection towards 'em : And, according to the *French* Proverb ; *He that hath not, cannot lose* ; so, on the contrary, he that hath, must lose. Our Meeting is not more certain, than our Parting : Either we must leave them, and so their Grief for us must double ours ; or they must leave us, and so our Grief for 'em will be no less than our Love was extended.

14. IF then thou wilt be truly wise, set thy Heart upon that only Good, which is not capable of losing : Divided Affections abate of their Force ; and since there are no Objects of Dearness, which distracts thy Love, be sure to place it wholly upon that Infinite Goodness, which shall entertain it with Mercy, and reward it with Blessedness. If *Elkanah* therefore could say to his Barren Wife *Hannah*, 1 Sam. 1. 8. *Why weepest thou ? and why is thy Heart heavy ? Am not I better to thee than ten Sons ?* How much more comfortably may'st thou hear the *Father of Mercies* say to thy Soul, Why is thy Heart heavy ? Am not I better to thee than ten thousand ?

S E C T. XIV.

Want of Repose.

1. **T**HOU art afflicted for want of that which is incident to distemper'd Bodies, and thoughtful Minds: How wearisom it is to spend the long Night, tossing up and down in a restless Bed, in chase of Sleep, which the more eagerly follow'd, flies so much the farther from us? Could'st thou forbear the Desire of it, perhaps it would come unexpected: Now thou sue'st for it, like some froward Piece, it is coy and peevish, and punishes thee for thy Eagerness after it.

2. HE that commanded an *Hundred twenty seven Provinces*, could not command Rest; *On that Night his Sleep departed from him*, Esth. 6. 1. neither could be forc'd, or intreated to his Bed. And the Great *Babylonian* Monarch, though he laid some hold on Sleep, yet could not keep it; for *His Sleep brake from him*, Dan 2. 1. And for Great and Wise *Solomon*, it would not so much as come within his view; *Neither Night nor Day seeth he Sleep with his Eyes*, Eccles. 8. 16.

3. **SURELY**, as there is no Earthly thing more comfortable to Nature, than Bodily Rest,

as *Jeremiah* saith, Jer. 31. 26. *And my Sleep was sweet unto me*: So there is nothing more grievous and disheartning: If the Senses be not sometimes in meet Vicissitudes, lock't up, How can they chuse but run themselves out of Breath, wearying and wasting themselves to nothing, if the Body be not refreshed with a moderate Enterchange of Repose? And as commonly the Soul follows the Temper of the Body, it cannot but find a Discomposure and Debilitation in all her Faculties and Operations.

4. DO we not find Ravings and Frenzies the ordinary Attendants of over Watchfulness? Therefore thy Tongue hath just Cause to complain of thy Eyes. For Remedy, instead of closing thy Lids to wait for Sleep; lift up thy Eyes to Him that *Giveth his Beloved rest*, Psal. 127. 2. For He it is, that holdeth thine Eyes waking, Psal. 77. 4. He that made thine Eyes, keeps off Sleep from thy Body, for the Good of thy Soul. Let not thine Eyes wake, without thy Heart. The Spouse of *Christ* can say, *I sleep, but my Heart waketh*, Cant. 5. 4. But how much more would she say, Mine Eyes wake, and my Heart also?

5. WHEN thou canst not see Sleep, labour to see Him that is Invisible: One Glimpse of that Sight, is worth more than all the Sleep thine Eyes can be capable of. Resign thy self up into his Hands, to be at his Disposal. What is this sweet Acquiescence, but the Rest of the Soul? Which if thou canst find in thy self, thou shalt quietly digest the Want of Bodily Repose.

6. THOU

6. THOU wantest Sleep: Take heed of aggravating thine Affliction: It is only an Evil of Loss, but not of Sense; a meer want of what thou wishest, not a pain of what thou feelest. Alas! How many which want Rest, are tortur'd with intolerable Torments in all the Parts of their Body; who would think themselves Happy, if they were in thy Condition? Might they but have Ease, how gladly would they forbear Rest? Be not therefore troubled for want of Rest; but rather be thankful that no worse Evil attends thee.

7. THOU lack'st Sleep; a thing we desire not so much for its own sake, as in a way to Health. What if *God* be pleas'd to dispose of thee, and to give thee Health without it? *Goullart* reports out of *Gaspar Wolfius*, of a Woman in *Padua*, that continued fifteen Days and Nights without Sleep: And that is very memorable, which *Seneca* tells us of great *Mecenas*, that in three Years he slept not so much as the space of an Hour: Which however *Lipsius* thinks good to mitigate with a favourable Construction, as conceiving an Impossibility of an absolute Vigilancy.

8. YET if we compare it with other Instances of the same kind, we shall find no reason to scruple the utmost Rigour of that Relation; if we compare it with what Learned *Heurnius* tells us, upon good Assurance given him, when he was a Student in *Padua*; *Nizolius* the famous *Ciceronian*, liv'd ten Years without Sleep.

9. BUT

9. BUT that exceeds all Example, which Monsieur *Goulart* reports out of an Author of good Reputation, of a Gentlewoman, who for thirty five Years, remain'd without any Sleep, and found no Inconvenience, or Distemper thereby; as was attested by her Husband, and Servants. *The Hand of God is not shortned*: He who miraculously protracted the Life of the Maid of *Meures* so many Years, without Meat; hath sustain'd the Lives of these fore-mentioned Persons thus long, without Sleep; that it might appear, *Man lives not by Meat, or Sleep only, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God*, Matth. 4. 4. Luk. 4. 4. Deut. 8. 3. If He should please to bless thee with a watchful Health, the Blessing is far greater, than if He allow'd thee to sleep out thy time in a dull unprofitable Rest.

10. THOU wantest Sleep: *Behold, He that keepeth Israel, doth neither slumber nor sleep*, Psal. 121. 4. Those Blessed Spirits, that continually behold the Face of *God*, never sleep: For Sleep is but a Symptom of frail Mortality; and the less we partake of it, we come so much the nearer to those Spiritual Natures, whose Perfection requires no Rest. The retir'd Christians, in the Primitive Times, affecting to come near an Angelical Life, wilfully repelled Sleep; neither would ever admit it, till it necessarily forc'd it self upon them. Thou suffer'st no more out of the Distemper of Humors, or unnatural Obstructions, than better Men have willingly drawn to 'em out of Holy Resolutions. It is
but

but our Construction, that makes those things tedious to us, which have prov'd easie to others.

II. THOU wantest Sleep: Have *Patience* for a while; thou art going where there shall be no need, no use of it: And, in the mean time, thy Better Part cannot rest: Though the Gates be shut, that it cannot shew it self, yet it ever will be active. As for this Lump of Earth, it shall ere long sleep its full; where no Noise can wake it, till *The Voice of the Arch-Angel, and the Trumpet of God* shall call it up in the Morning of the Resurrection, 1 *Thess.* 4. 16.

SECT.

S E C T. XV.

Of Gray - Hairs.

1. **G**RAY-HAIRS is that we all desire to aspire to ; and when attain'd, are as ready to complain of, as our greatest Misery : verifying in part that Old Observation, *That Wedlock and Age are things which we desire, and repent of.* Is this our Ingratitude, or Inconstancy, that we are weary of what we wish't for? Perhaps this Accusation may not be universal : There is much difference in Constitutions, and much latitude in Old-Age. Infancy and Youth have their limits, Age admits of no certain Determination.

2. A T Seventy, *King David was old, and stricken in Years ; and they cover'd him with Clothes, but he got no heat, 1 King. i. i.* Whereas *Caleb* can profess ; *Now lo, I am fourscore and five Years old ; as yet, I am as strong this Day, as I was in the Day that Moses sent me to spy out the Land : As my Strength was then, even so is my Strength now, for War, both to go out, and come in, Josh. 14. 10, 11.* And beyond him, *Moses was an hundred and twenty Years old ; when he died, his Eye was not dim, nor his Natural Force abated, Deut. 34. 7.* *Methuselah* was but old, when he
was

was *Nine hundred sixty and nine*, Gen. 5. 27.

3. BUT for the Generality of Mankind, the same *Moses*, who liv'd to see an hundred and twenty Years, hath set Man's ordinary Period at half his own: *Psal. 90. 10. The Days of our Age are threescore Years and ten; and though Men be so strong, that they come to fourscore Years: yet is their Strength but Labour and Sorrow: So soon passeth it away, and we are gone.* Fourscore Years alone, are Load enough for the Strength, much more for the Weakness of Age: But when Labour and Sorrow are added to the Weight, how can we but sink under the Burden?

4. HE was both Old and Wise, that said out of Experience; *That our last Days are the Dregs of our Life: The clearer Part is gone, and all drawn out, the Lees sink down to the bottom.* Who can express the miserable Inconveniences that attend the Aged? Wherein our Cares must needs be multiplied according to the manifold Occasions of our Affairs: For the World is a Net, wherein the more we stir, the more we are entangled.

5. AND for Bodily Grievances, What Varieties do we here meet withal? VVhat *Aches* of the *Bones*, *Pains* in the *Joynts*, *Convulsions* of *Sinews*, and *Torments* in the *Bowels*; the *Stone*, *Collick*, *Strangury*, and *Distillation* of *Rheums*? What *Hollow Coughs*, *Weaknesses* of *Retention*, *Expulsion*, *Digestion*, and *Decay* of *Senses*? So that Age is no other, than the common *Sewer* into which all the *Diseases* of our *Life* are us'd to emty in. Well therefore might *Sarah* say; *After I am waxed Old, shall I have Pleasure?* Gen. 18. 12.

18. 12. And good *Barzillai*, justly excuses himself for not accepting the gracious Invitation of *David*, 2 Sam. 19. 35. *I am this Day fourscore Years old, and can I discern between Good and Evil? Can thy Servant taste what I eat, or what I drink? Can I hear any more the Voice of singing Men, and singing Women? Wherefore then should thy Servant be yet a Burden unto my Lord the King?*

6. THESE are they the Preacher calls the *Evil Days*, and the *Years*, wherein a Man shall say, *I have no Pleasure in them: Wherein The Sun, or the Light, or the Moon, or the Stars are darkned, and the Clouds return after the Rain: When the Keepers of the House shall tremble, and the Strong Men shall bow themselves, and the Grinders cease, because they are few, and those that look out of the Windows be darkned*, Eccles. 12. 1, 2, 3. In short, what is our Old-Age, but the Winter of our Life? And how can we expect any other, but *gloomy Weather, chilling Frosts, Storms, and Tempests?*

7. BUT whil'st we do thus querulously aggravate the Incommodiousness of Age, we must beware lest we derogate from the Bounty of our Maker, and disparage those Blessings which He accounts Precious; amongst which Old-Age is none of the meanest. Had He not put that value upon it, He would not have honour'd it with his own Stile; calling Himself, *The Ancient of Days?* Dan. 7. 9, 13, 22. Or would He else have set out this Mercy, as a Reward and Obedience to Himself, (*I will fulfil the number of thy Days*, Exod. 23. 26.) and of Obedience
to

to our Parents, *To live long in the Land*, Exod. 20. 12.

8. WOULD He have promised it as a marvellous Favour to restor'd *Jerusalem*, (now become a City of Truth) *That there shall yet Old Men, and Old Women dwell in the Streets of Jerusalem, and every Man with his Staff in his Hand for every Age?* Zach. 8. 4. Would He else have denounc'd it as a Judgment to over-indulgent *Eli*, 1 Sam. 2. 32. *There shall not be an Old Man in thy House for ever?* Far be it from us, to despise that which God doth honour, and to turn his Blessings into a Curse. For the same God, who best knows the Price of his own Favours, as He makes no small Estimation of Age Himself, so He hath thought fit to call for a high Respect to be given to it by Men, out of an Holy Awe to Himself. Lev. 19. 32. *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary Head, and honour the Face of the Old Man, and fear thy God. I am the Lord.*

9. HENCE it is, that He hath pleas'd to put together *The Ancient, and the Honourable*, Isa. 9. 15. and hath told us, *That an Hoary Head is a Crown of Glory, if it be found in the way of Righteousness*, Prov. 16. 31. Chap 20. 29. And lastly, makes it an Argument of the deplorable Estate of *Jerusalem*, Lam. 4. 16. *That They favoured not the Elders.* As therefore, we too sensibly feel what to complain of, so we know what Priviledges we may challenge as due to our Age; even such as Nature it self hath taught those Heathens, which have been in the next Degree to Savage. If Pride and Skill have made the *Athenians* uncivil, yet a Young *Lacedemonian*

nian will rise up, and yield his Place in the Theatre to neglected Age.

10. IT is not a little injurious, so to fasten our Eyes upon the Disadvantages of any Condition, as not to take in the Advantages that belong to it; which carefully laid together, may perhaps sway the Ballance to an equal Poise. Suppose it be true, that Old-Age is oppress'd with many Bodily Grievs; yet it may yield other Immunities, which may keep the Scales even: Whereof it is not the least, that it gives us firm Resolution, and bold Securities against Dangers, and Death it self: For the Old Man knows, how little of his Thred is left in the Winding; and therefore, when just Occasion is offer'd, insists not much upon so inconsiderable a Remainder.

11. OLD-AGE, and Orbity, as *Cesellus* profess'd, were those two things, that emboldned him. And when *Castritius* refus'd to deliver the Hostages of *Placentia* to *Carbo* the Consul, and was threatned with many Swords; he answer'd those Menaces with his many Years. What Young Man would have been so easily induc'd to part with his Life, and have been so ready to give Entertainment to an unexpected Death? Surely the Hope and Love of Life, commonly softens the Spirits of vigorous Youth, and dissuades them from those Enterprizes, which are attended with manifest Perils: Whereas extream Age teacheth us to contemn Dangers.

12. YET a greater Priviledge of Age, is a Freedom from those impetuous Passions wherewith Youth is commonly over-sway'd; for with
our

our Natural Heat, is abated the Fire of our inordinate Lusts, so as our weaker Appetite may easily be subdu'd to Reason. The temperate Old Man in the Story, when one shew'd him a Beautiful Face, could answer; *I have long since left to be Eye-sick: And could say of Pleasure; I have gladly with-drawn my self from the service of that Imperious Mistress.*

13. WHAT an unreasonable Vassalage our Youthful Lusts subject us to, we need no other Instance, than in the Strongest Man *Sampson*; who was effeminated by his impotent Passion, and weakned in his Intellectuals so far, as wilfully to betray his own Life to a Mercenary Harlot, and to endure to hear her say; *Tell me where-with thou may'st be bound to do thee hurt?* Judg. 16. 6. How easily might he have answer'd thee; *O Delilah*, even with these Cords of Brutish Sensuality, where-with thou hast already bound me to the Loss of my Liberty, my Eyes, my Life? How was the Wisest Man, *Solomon*, besotted with his strange Wives, so as to be drawn away to the Worship of strange Gods? *1 King. 11. 5.*

14. AND how may the Firr-Trees howl, when the Cedars fall? Who can hope to be free from being transported with irregular Affections, when we see such great Precedents of Frailties before our Eyes? From the Danger of these sad Miscarriages, our Age happily secures us; putting us into that quiet Harbour, whence we may see Young Men perilously toss'd with those Tempests of unruly Passions, from which our cooler Age hath freed us.

L

15. ADD

15. ADD hereunto Experimental Knowledg, where-with Age is wont to enrich us ; every Dram whereof, is worth many Pounds of the best Junior Contentments : in comparison whereof, the Speculative Knowledg is weak and imperfect: This may come at an easie Rate ; perhaps cost us nothing: That, commonly, we pay dear for ; and therefore is justly esteem'd the more valuable. If Experience be the Mistress of Fools, I'm sure 'tis the Mother of Wisdom : Neither can it be, except we be too much wanting to our selves, but the long Observation of such variety of Actions and Events, as meet with us in the whole Course of our Life, must needs leave with us such sure Rules of Judgment, as may be unfailable Directions for our selves, and Others.

16. IN vain shall this be expected from our Younger Years, which the Wise Philosopher excludes from being meet Auditors, much less Judges of true Morality : In regard whereof, well might the Old Man say ; *Ye Young Men, think us Old Men fools ; but we Old Men, know you Young Men to be fools.* Certainly, what Value soever Ignorance may put upon it, this Fruit of Age is such, as that the Earth hath nothing equally so precious. It was a prophane Word, and fit for the Mouth of an Heathen Poet, *That Prudence is above Destiny.* But surely, a Christian may modestly and justly say, That next to Divine Providence, Humane Prudence may challenge the supreme Place in the Administration of these Earthly Affairs ; and that Age may claim the greatest Interest in that Vertue.

17. YOUNG

17. YOUNG *Elibu* could say; *Job* 32. 7. *Multitude of Years should teach Wisdom.* And the Wise Man, *Eccluf.* 25. 4, 5. *Oh, how comely a thing is Judgment for Gray-Hairs, and for Antient Men to know Counsel!* *Oh, how comely is the Wisdom of Old Men, and Understanding and Counsel to Men of Honour!* In regard whereof, the *Grecians* could say; *That Young Men are for Action, and Old Men for Advice:* And among the *Romans*, we know that *Senators* take their Name from Age. That which causeth the Weakness of Aged Eyes, is (their Visual Spirits not uniting till some distance) they better discerning Things further off, is the Praise and Strength of their Mental Eyes; they see either Judgments or Advantages afar off, and accordingly frame their Determinations.

18. IT is observ'd, that Old Lutes sound better than New. It was *Rehoboam's* Folly and Undoing, *1 King.* 12. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, &c. That he would rather follow the Counsel of his Green Heads that stood before him, than of those Grave Senators, that had stood before his Wiser Father. Not that meer Age is of it self thus Rich in Wisdom, and Knowledge: But Age well cultur'd, and improv'd, is valuable. There are Old Men, that do but live, or rather have a Being upon Earth, (so have Stocks and Stones, as well as they) who can give no Proof of their many Years, but their Gray-Hairs, and Infirmities. There are those, who, like to *Hermogenes*, are Old, whilst they are Young; and Children, when they are Old: These the Elder they grow, are so much more stupid.

19. TIME is an ill Measure of Age, which should rather be meted by Proficiency, Ripeness of Judgment, and by the Monuments of our commendable and useful Labours. If we have thus imploy'd our selves, our *Autumn* will shew what our *Spring* was; and our Gray-Hairs will give us more cause to fear our Pride, than our Dejection. We accuse our Age of many Weaknesses and Indispositions: But these Imputations must not be Universal: Many of these are the Faults of the Person, not of the Age. He said well, As all Wine doth not turn sour with Age, no more doth every Nature.

20. OLD Oyl is noted to be clearer, and hotter in Medicinal Uses, than New. There are those, who are pettish, and morose in Youth; and there are those, on the contrary, who are mild, gentle, and sociable, in their decay'd Years. There are those, who are crazy in their Prime; and there are those, who in their Wain are Vigorous: And there are those, who e're the fullness of their Age, have lost their Memory; as *Hermogenes*, *Corvinus*, *Antonius Carracalla*, *Georgius Trapezuntius*, and *Nizolius*.

21. THERE are those, whose intellectuals have so happily held out, that they have been best at the last. *Plato* in his last year of fourscore and one, died as it were with his pen in his hand: *Isocrates* wrote his best Piece at ninety four years: and it is said of *Demosthenes*, That when death summon'd him at an 100 years, and somewhat more he bemoan'd himself, that he must now die, when he began to gain some knowledge. And as for spiritual graces and improvements, the *Psalmist* satis-

satisfies us, *Psal 92. 12, 13. Such as be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the Courts of our God: they also shall bring forth more fruit in their age; and shall be fat and well liking.*

22. BUT the chief benefit of our age is, our near approach to our journeys end: for the end of all motion is rest; which when once attain'd, their remains nothing but fruition: now our age brings us, after a weary race within some breathings of our journeys end: for if young men may die, old men must, a condition which a meer carnal heart bewails and abhors, complaining of nature as niggardly in her dispensations of the shortest time to her noblest Creatures; and envying the oaks, which many generations of men must leave standing and growing.

23. NO marvel, the worldling thinks himself here at home, and looks upon death as a banishment: he hath placed his heav'n here below, and can see nothing in his remove, but either Annihilation, or Torment: but for us Christians, who know, that *whilst we are present in the body, we are absent from the Lord; 2 Cor. 5. 6.* and do justly account our selves Foreigners, our life a pilgrimage, heaven our home; how can we but rejoyce, that after a tedious and painful Travel, we do now draw near to the threshold of our fathers house; wherein we know there are *many Mansions*, and all glorious, *Joh. 14. 2.*

24. I could blush to hear a *Heathen* say, if God would offer me the choice of renewing my age, and returning to my first childhood, I should heartily refuse it; for I should be loath, after I have passed so much of my race to be called back

from the Goal, to the bars of my first setting out; and to hear a Christian sighing and sobbing at the thought of his dissolution. Where is our faith of an heav'n, if having been so long Sea-beaten, we are loth to think of putting in-to the safe and blessed harbour of Immortality?

SECT.

S E C T. XVI:

Of Mortallity.

1. **T**HOU fearest *Death*: Thou wert not a man if thou didst not: the holiest, the wisest, the strongest that ever were, have done no less: he is the *King of Terrours*, and therefore may and must command it. Thou mayst hear the man after Gods own heart say, *Psal. 116. 3. The sorrows of death compassed me: and Psal. 88. 3. 4, 5. My soul is full of troubles, my life draweth nigh to the grave: I am counted with them that go down to the pit, as a man that hath no strength; free among the dead.* Good and great *Hezekiah*, upon the message of his death, *chattered like a Crane or a Swallow, and went mourning as a dove, Isa. 38. 14.*

2. **T**HOU fearest as a man; but thou must strive to overcome it as a Christian: which thou mayst doe, if from the terrible aspect of the messenger, thou cast thine eyes upon the gracious and amiable face of God that sends him. Holy *David* shews the way; *Psal. 18. 5. 6 The snares of death prevented me: in my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God; he heard my voice out of his Temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears: He that is our God, is the God of Salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues of death, Psal. 68. 20.*

3. MAKE him thy friend, and *Death* shall be to thee an *advantage*, *Phil.* 1. 21. it is true as the wise man said, *Wisd.* 1. 13. *Chap.* 2. 24. that *God made not death; but that through envy of the Devil death came into the world:* but though God made him not, he is pleas'd to employ him as his messenger to summon some to Judgment, and to invite others to glory, and those which the *Psalmist* makes mention of are these latter, *Psal.* 116. 15. *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints:* and what reason hast thou to abominate that which God accounts precious?

4. THOU art afraid of *death*: acquaint thy self with him more, and thou wilt fear him less. *Bears* and *Lions*, which at the first sight affright us, upon frequent viewing lose their Terrour: inure thine eyes to the sight of death, and that face shall not displease thee. Thou must shortly dwell with him for a long time, for *the dayes of darkness are many*, *Eccl.* 11. 8. but in the mean time entertain him, as the blessed Apostle doth, *1 Cor.* 15. 31. *I protest by your rejoycing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I dye daily.*

5. BID him to thy board, lodge him in thy bed, Talk with him in thy closet, and walk with him in thy Garden, as *Joseph of Arimathea* did; and by no means suffer him to be a stranger to thy thoughts: this familiarity shall bring thee to delight in his company whom thou didst dread, then thou mayest with the blessed Apostle say, *Phil.* 1. 23. *I have a desire to be with Christ, which is far better.*

6. Thou

6. THOU art grievously afraid of *death*: our fears are apt to imagine, and to aggravate evils: Even *Christ* himself walking upon the *waters*, was by the *Disciples* trembled at, as some dreadful apparition; perhaps thou lookst at *death* as some utter abolition, or extinction of thy being; and nature must needs shrink back at the thought of not being at all: this is an ill and dangerous misprision: it is but a departing, which thou call'st a death.

7. SEE how God himself styles it to father *Abraham*; *Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace, thou shalt be buried in a good old age, Gen. 15. 15. And Jacob, Gen. 49. 33.* When *Jacob* had made an end of commanding his Sons; he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people. So that dying is no other, then going to our Fathers, and gathering to our people, with whom we shall live in a better world, and re-appear glorious. Let but thy faith represent death to thee in this shape, and he will not appear so terrible.

8. DO but observe in what familiar terms God Confer'd with *Moses* concerning his death; *Deut. 32. 49. Get thee up into this mountain Abarim unto Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession, and dye in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered to thy people, as Aaron thy brother didd in Mount Hor, and was gathered to his people: So it is no more, then go up and dye; should it have been to go a dayes journey in the wilderness to sacrifice, it could have*

have been no otherwise expressed ; or as if it were all one to go up to *Sinai* to meet with God, and to go up to *Nebo* and dye. Neither is it otherwise with us ; only the Difference is, that *Moses* must first view the land of promise, and then dye ; whereas we must first dye, and then see the promised land.

9. THOU art troubled with the fear of death : what reason hast thou to be afflicted with that which is the common condition of mankind ? remember the words of *Joshua*, *Jos.* 23. 14. *Behold this day* (saith he) *I am going the way of all the earth.* If all the earth go this way, couldst thou be so fond as to think there should be a by-path left for thee to tread in, were it so that *Monarchs* and *Princes*, that *Patriarchs*, *Prophets* and *Apostles* were allow'd any easier passage out of the world, thou mightst perhaps find some pretence of reason to repine at a painful dissolution, but now since all go one way, (and as the wise *Philosopher* sayes, those which are unequal in their birth, are in their deaths equal) there can be no ground for a discontented murmur.

10. GRUDGE if thou wilt, that thou art a man, grudge not that being a man thou must dye : it is true that those whom the last day shall find alive, shall not dye, but they shall be changed ; *1 Cor.* 15. 51, 52, but this change of theirs shall be no other then an annalogical death, wherein there shall be a speedy consumption of all our corrupt and drossy parts ; so as the pain must be so much the more intense, by how much it is more short than in the ordinary course of death.

Briefly,

Briefly, that *change* is a *death*, and our *death* is a *change*, as *Job* styles it; *Job* 14. 14. The difference is not in the pain, but in the speed of the transaction: *Fear not then the sentence of death; remember them that have been before thee, and that come after, for this is the sentence of the Lord over all flesh.* Ecclus. 41. 3.

11. THOU fearest *Death*: so do not Infants, Children, or Distracted Persons, as the *Philosopher* observes: why should use of reason render us more Cowardly, than defect of reason doth them? Thou fearest that which others wish for: *O Death, how acceptable is thy sentence to the needy, and to him whose strength faileth, that is now in the last age, and is vexed with all things, and to him that despaireth, and hath lost patience:* Ecclus. 41. 2. *Wherefore is light given (saith Job) to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in Soul? Which long for death, but it cometh not, and dig for it more than for hid treasures; which rejoyce exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave?* Job 3. 20, 21, 22.

12. HOW many are there that invite the violence of *death*, and if refus'd, do, as *Ignatius* threatn'd he would do to the *Lyons*, force his assault? *Death* is the same to all: the Difference is in the Disposition of the Entertainers; Could'st thou look upon *Death* with their eyes, he wou'd be as welcome to thee, as he is to them: at the least, why shouldst thou not labour to have thy heart so wrought upon that this face of *Death* which seems lovely and desirable to some, may not appear over-terrible to thee?

13. THOU art afraid to die; Could'st thou then have been capable of the use of reason, thou wou'dst

wou'dst have been more afraid of coming into the World, then thou art now of going out: for why shou'd we be more afraid of the better, then of the worse? *Better is the day of death, than the day of ones birth*, saith the Preacher: Eccles. 7. 2. better every way; our birth begins our miseries, our death ends them: the one enters the best of men into a wretched World, but the other enters the good into a World of Glory: Certainly, were it not for our infidelity,, as we came crying into the World, so we shou'd go rejoycing out of it: and if some have solemnized their birthday with feasting and triumph, the Church of old hath bestowed that name and cost upon the Dying day of her Martyrs and Saints.

14. THOU abhorrest *Death*, and fleest from it as from a Serpent: but dost thou know that his sting is gone? What harm can there be in a sting-less snake? Hast thou not seen or heard of some delicate Dames that have carried 'em thus corrected in their bosom for coolness, and for the pleasure of their smoothness? *The sting of Death is sm*; 1 Cor. 15. 56. He may hiss, and wind about us, but cannot hurt us when that sting is pull'd out: Look up, O thou believing Soul, to thy blessed Saviour, who hath pluckt out this sting of Death, and happily triumphs over it; *O Death where is thy sting? O Grave where is thy victory?* 1 Cor. 15. 55.

15. THY Soul and Body, old Companions are loth to part: it is but their forbearing their wonted Society, for a while; they do but take
leave

leave of each other till they meet in the day of resurrection: in the mean time they are both safe, and the better part happy: it is commendable in the *Jews* (otherwise the worst of men) that they call their Grave *Beth Chajim*, the house of the Living; and when they return from the Burial of their Neighbours, they pluck up the grass, and cast it into the Air, with those words of the *Psalmist*, *Psal. 72. 16. They shall flourish and put forth as the grass upon the Earth.*

16. DID we not believe a Resurrection of the one part, and a re-uniting of the other, we had reason to be utterly daunted with the thought of a dissolution; now we have no cause to be dismayed with a little intermission; It was the saying of a wise *Heathen*, that the Death which we so fear and flee from, doth but respite Life for a while, doth not take it away, the day will come which shall restore us to Light again, settle thy Soul in this assurance, and thou canst not be comforted with a necessary Parting.

17. THOU art afraid of Death; when thou art weary of thy days labour, art thou afraid of rest? Hear what thy *Saviour*, who is the *Lord of Life*, esteems of Death, *Joh. 11. 11. Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, and of Jairus his Daughter, Matth. 9. 24. The Maid is not dead, but sleepeth*: neither useth the Spirit of God any other Language, concerning his Servants under the old Testament: *Now shall I sleep in the Dust*, saith holy *Job*, *Job 7. 21. and of David, 2 Sam. 7. 12. When thy days be fulfilled, thou shalt sleep with thy Fathers*, nor yet

under the new : *for this cause many are weak, and sickly, among you, and many sleep*, saith the Apostle. 1 Cor. 11. 30.

18. THE *Philosophers* of old were wont to call *Sleep* the *Brother of Death* ; but God sayes *Death* is no other than *sleep* it self ; a *sleep* both sure and sweet : When thou liest down at night to thy repose, thou canst not be so certain to awake again in the morning, as when thou layest thy self down in *Death*, thou art sure to wake in the morning of the *Resurrection*. Out of this *Bodily sleep* thou mayest be startled with some noise of sudden horreur, or fearful dreams, with tumults or alarms of *War* ; but here thou shalt rest quietly in the place of silence, free from all inward and outward disturbances, whilst in the mean time thy *Soul* shall see none but visions of joy, and blessedness.

19. BUT, oh the sweet and hearty expression of our last rest, and the Issue of our happy resurrection, which our holy *Apostle* hath laid forth, for the consolation of his mournful *Thessalonians*, 1 Thess. 4. 14. *For if we believe, that Jesus died and rose again ; Even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.* So that our belief is Antidote enough against the worst of *Death* : And why are we troubled at him when we believe that *Jesus* dyed, and what a Triumph is this over *Death*, that the same *Jesus* who dyed rose again ? And what a comfort it is, that the same *Jesus* who arose, shall both come again, and bring all his with him in *Glory* ? And lastly, what a strong Cordial is this to all good hearts, that all those which die well, do sleep in *Jesus* ? Thou thoughtest,

thoughtest, perhaps, of sleeping in the Bed of the *Grave*; and there indeed is rest: but he tells thee of sleeping in the bosom of *Jesus*; and there is immortality and blessedness. O. Blessed *Jesus*, in thy presence is the fulness of Joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore, Psal. 16. 12. Who would desire to walk in the World when he may sleep in Christ?

20. THOU fearest *Death*: it is much on what terms, and in what form *Death* present himself to thee: if as an Enemy, (as the *Apostle* styles him) 1 Cor. 15. 26. *The last Enemy that shall be destroyed is Death* thy unpreparation will make him dreadful; but thy readiness and fortitude takes off his terror: if as a Messenger of God he is sent to carry thee to happiness, what reason hast thou to be afraid of thine own Bliss? It is one thing what *Death* is in himself, a privation of Life; such, as Nature cannot chuse but abhor him: another thing what he is by Christ made unto us; an introduction to Life, an harbinger to Glory.

21. WHY, would the Lord of Life have yielded unto *Death*, and by yielding vanquish him; but that he might alter and sweeten *Death* to us; and of a fierce Tyrant, make him a Friend and Benefactor? And if we look upon him thus changed, thus reconciled, how can we chuse but bid him welcome?

22. THOU art afraid of the pangs of *Death*: There are those that have dyed without any great sense of pain: Some we have known to have yielded

yielded up their Souls without so much as a groan : and how knowest thou , what measure God hath allotted to thee ? Our Death is a Sea-Voyage, (The holy *Apostle*, desired to launch forth, Phil. 1.) wherein some find a rough and tempestuous passage; others calm and smooth: such thing may prove; so as thy dissolution may be more easie than a fit of sickness.

23. BUT if God have determin'd otherwise, look unto *Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith*; (Heb. 12. 2.) the Son of God, the Lord of Glory; see with what agonies he conflicted, what torments he endrred in his death for thee: look upon his bloody sweat, his bleeding temples, furrowed back, nailed hands and feet, his rack'd joints, and pierc'd side: hear his strong cries, consider the shame, the pain, the Curse of the Cross which he underwent for thy sake: say whether thy sufferings can be comparable to his. He is a cowardly and unworthy *Soldier* that follows his *General* fighting. Behold, these are the steps wherein thy God and Saviour hath trod before thee: Walk on courageously in this deep and bloody way; after a few paces thou shalt overtake him in Glory: *For if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.* 2 Tim. 2. 12.

24. THOU shrink'st at the thoughts of *Death*: Is it not for that thou hast over-valued *Life*, and made *Earth* thy home? Rich persons that live at ease are loth to stir abroad, especially upon hard and stormy *Voyages*: perhaps 'tis so with thee; wherein I cannot but much pity thy mistak-

mistaking , in placing thy contentment there, where a greater and wiser man could find nothing but *vanity and vexation.*

25. A L A S, what can be our Exile, if this be our home? What entertainment is this to be enamour'd on? What canst thou meet with here, but distempered humours, hard usages, violent passions, and bodily sicknesses; sad complaints, disappointed hopes, and frequent miscarriages, momentany pleasures sauc'd with sorrows, and lastly , shadows of joy , and real miseries : are these the things that so bewitch thee, that when Death calls at thy door, thou art ready to say to it, as the Devil said to our Saviour, Matth. 8. 29. *Art thou come to torment me before the time?*

26. A R E these those alluring contentments, that cause thee to say of the world, as St. Peter said of Mount Tabor, Matth. 17. 4. *Master, it is good for us to be here,* if thou have any Faith in thee, (and what dost thou profess to be a Christian without it?) look up to the things of that other world, where thou art going and see whether that true Life, pure Joy , perfect Felicity, and the Eternity of all these, may not be worthy to draw up thy heart to a longing desire of the fruition of 'em, and a contemptuous disvaluation of what the Earth can promise, in comparison of this infinite blessedness.

27. I T was one of the defects which our Noble and Learned Philosopher the Lord *Verulam* found in the Physitians that they do not study those remedies that might procure the easie
M passage

Advancement
of Learning.

passage of their patients (since they must needs die) through the Gates of Death: Such helps I must leave to the care of the skilful Sages of Nature; the use whereof I suppose must be with much caution, lest whilst they endeavour to sweeten Death, they shorten Life.

28. B U T let me prescribe and commend to you, this spiritual means of thine happy *Euthanasia*; which can be no other than this faithful disposition of the labouring Soul, that can truly say with *Timothy*. 2 Tim. 1. 12. *I know whom I have believed: and chap. 4. 7, 8. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day.*

29. T H O U startest back at the mention of Death: how canst thou but blush to read of that Heathen Martyr *Socrates*, when the Plato *phædone* message of Death was brought him, could applaud the news with much joy, : or of a Cardinal of *Rome*, (who yet expected a tormenting Purgatory) that received the intimation of his approaching death, with *buona nuova, buona nuova, O Che buona nuova e questa!* is not their confidence thy shame; who believing that when our *Earthly house of this Tabernacle* shall be dissolv'd, we have a *building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens*. 2 Cor. 5. 1. yet shrinks at the motion of taking the possession of it?

30. C A N S T

30. CANST thou with dying *Mithridates* (when he took his unwilling farewell of the World) cry out, *oh light!* when thou art going to a light more glorious than this thou leavest, than the Sun who is more weak to it than a rush-Candle is to that: It is our infidelity, that makes us unwilling to die: did we think (according to the curst opinion of some fanatick persons) that the Soul sleeps as well as the Body, from the moment of the dissolution, till the day of Resurrection.

31. O R, did we doubt, lest we should wander to unknown places where we cannot be certain of the entertainment; or did we fear a scorching Tryal upon the Emigration, in flames little inferior, for the time to those of Hell, there were some cause for us to tremble at the approach of Death: but now that we can boldly say, with the wise man. *Wisd. 3. 1, 2, 3. The Souls of the righteous are in the hands of God, and there shall no torment touch them: in the sight of the unwise they seem'd to die, and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction; but they are in peace.*

32. O H thou of little Faith, why fear'st thou? Why dost thou not chide thy self, as that dying Saint did of old, go forth, my Soul, go boldly forth, what art thou afraid of? Lo, the Angels are ready to receive thee, and to carry thee up to thy Glory; neither shalt thou sooner have left this wretched Body, then thou shalt be possess'd of Heaven: After a momentary darkness cast upon Nature, thou shalt enjoy the Beatifical Vision of the Glorious God: Be not afraid to be

happy, but say, out of Faith, that which *Jonah* said in anger ; *Jonah 4. 3. It is better for me to dye than to live.*

33. I am afraid to die : this is the voice of Nature : but wilt thou hear what Faith saith ? *To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* If therefore meer Nature reign in thee, thou canst not but be affrighted with Death : But if true Grace be prevalent in thy Soul, that guest shall not be unwelcome : Wasever any man afraid of profit and advantage ? Such is Death to the faithful : Whosoever finds Christ to be his Life, shall be sure to find Death his gain, for he is thereby brought to a more full and near Communion with him : Whereas before he enjoyed his Saviour only by the dim apprehension of his Faith, now he doth clearly and immediately enjoy that glorious presence, which only makes blessedness.

34. THIS is it which causeth *Death* to change his copie ; and renders him who is of himself formidable, pleasing, and beneficial ; *I desire to depart, and to be with Christ,* saith the man who was rapt up in the third Heaven ; had it been only departing, surely he had not been in such an extasie, but *to depart, and to be with Christ,* is that which raiseth his Soul.

35. W H E N the Heathen *Socrates* was to dye for his Religion, he comforted himself with this, that he should go to the place where he should see *Orpheus, Homer, Musæus,* and the other Worthies of the former Ages ; Poor man ! Could he have

have come to have known *God manifested in the flesh, and received up into Glory*, 1 Tim. 3. 16. and there in that glorified state sitting at the right hand of Majesty ; Could he have attain'd to know the Blessed Order of the *Cherubim*, and *Seraphim*, *Angels*, *arch-Angels*, *Principalities* and *Powers*, and the rest of the most Glorious Hierarchy of Heaven ; Could he have been acquainted with that Celestial Choir of the *Spirits of just men made perfect* : Heb. 12. 23. Could he have reached to know the God and Father of Spirits, the infinite and incomprehensible Glorious Deity, whose presence transfuses Everlasting Blessedness into all those Citizens of Glory : and could he have known that, he should have an undoubted interest, (instantly upon his dissolution) in that infinite Bliss ; how much more gladly would he have taken of his *hemlock*, and how more joyfully would he have passed into that happy world ?

36. ALL this we know, and are no less assur'd then of our present being ; with what comfort therefore should we think of changing our present Condition with a Blessed Immortality ? How sweet a Song was that of old *Simeon* ? Luk. 2. 29. *Lord, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation* : That which he saw by the Eye of his Sense, thou seest by the Eye of thy Faith ; even the *Lords Christ* ; vers. 16. he saw him in weakness, thou seest him in Glory ; why should'st thou not depart, not in peace only, but in joy and comfort ?

37. HOW did the Holy Proto-Martyr *Stephen* triumph over all the rage of his Enemies, and the violent fury of *Death*, when he had once seen the *Heavens opened*, and the *Son of man standing at the right hand of God*? Acts 7. 56. God offers thee the same blessed prospect to the Eye of thy Soul: Faith is the key that can open the Heav'n of Heav'ns, fix thy Eyes upon that glorious and saving Object: thou canst not but lay down thy Body in peace, and send up thy Soul into the hands of him that bought it, with the cheerful and sweet recommendation, of *Lord Jesus receive my Spirit*, Acts 7. 39.

SECT.

S E C T. XVII.

Of Judgment.

1. **T**HOU apprehendest it aright ; *Death* is terrible but *Judgment* more ; both these succeed upon the same decree ; *it is appointed unto men once to dye, but after this the judgment* : Heb. 9. 27. Neither is it more terrible, then less thought on ; *Death* , because he strikes on all hands, and lays before us so many sad examples of *mortality*, cannot but sometimes take up our hearts ; but the last *Judgment*, having no visible proofs to force it self upon our thoughts, too seldom fright us :

2. **Y**ET who can conceive the Terroure of that day ? Before which the *Sun* shall be turn'd into darkness , and the *Moon* into blood ; Acts 2. 29. That day, which shall burn as an *Oven*, when all the proud, and all that do wickedly shall be as the stubble ; Mal. 4. 1. That day, in which the *Heavens* shall pass away with a great noise : and the *Elements* shall melt with fervent heat ; the *Earth* also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up : 2 Pet. 3. 10. That day, wherein the *Lord Jesus* shall be reveal'd from *Heav'n* with his mighty *Angels* ; in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our *Lord Jesus Christ*. 2 Thess.

1. 7, 8. That Day, wherein the Lord will come with fire, and with his Chariots like a Whirlwind, to render his anger with fury; and his rebuke with flames of fire, for by fire and by his Sword will the Lord plead with all flesh : Isai. 66. 15, 16. That Day, wherein the Son of man shall come in his Glory, and all the Holy Angels with him; and shall sit upon the Throne of his Glory; and all Nations shall be gathered before him; and he shall separate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goats, Matth. 25. 31, 32. And that Day, wherein all the kindreds of the Earth shall wail because of him, Revel. 1. 7.

3. **T H A T** great and terrible day of the Lord which Joel speaks of, Joel 2. 31, wherein if the powers of Heav'n shall be shaken, how can the heart of man remain unmoved? Wherein if the World be dissolved, who can abide it? Alas, we are ready to tremble at but a Thunder crack in a poor Cloud; and at a small flash of Lightning that glances through our Eyes; what shall we do when the whole frame of the Heavens shall break in pieces, and when all shall be on a flame about our Ears? *Oh who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth?* Mal. 3. 2.

Y E T be of good chear, amidst all this horror there is comfort; whether thou be one of those whom it shall please God to reserve alive upon Earth to the sight of this dreadful day, he only knows in whose hands our times are; this we are sure of, that we are upon the last hours, of the last daies: Justly do we spit in the Faces of
St.

St. Peters Scoffers, that say *where is the promise of his coming?* Well knowing that the Lord is not slack as some account slackness; but he that shall come, will come, and not tarry. 2 Pet. 3. 4, 9. Heb. 10. 37. Well mayest thou live to see the Son of man come in the Clouds of Heaven, and to be an actor in this last Scene of the World :

5. IF so, let not thy heart be dismay'd with the expectation of these fearful things: thy change shall be sudden and quick; one moment shall put off thy Mortality, and clothe thee with that incorruption, which shall not be capable of fear and pain: the majesty of this appearance shall add to thy Joy and Glory: *Thou shalt then see the Lord himself descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel and with the trump of God: thou shalt see thy self, and those other which are alive and remain, to be caught up into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shalt thou be ever with the Lord.* Upon this assurance, how justly may the Apostle subjoyn, *Wherefore comfort one another with these words, 1 Thes. 4. 16, 17, 18.* Certainly, if ever there were comfort to be had in any words, not of Men or Angels only, but of the everliving God of truth, these are they that can and will afford it to our trembling souls.

6. BUT if thou be one of the number of those whom God hath determin'd to call off before hand, and by a faithful death to prevent the great day of his appearance; here is nothing for thee, but a joy unspeakable and full of glory: *for those that sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him;*

him; *1 Thes. 4. 15.* They shall be part of that glorious Train, which shall attend the Majesty of the great Judge of the world: yea they shall be Co-assessors to the Lord of Heaven and Earth, in this awful Judicature; as sitting upon the Bench, when guilty men and Angels shall be at the Bar: *To him that overcometh, saith Christ, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne. Rev. 3. 21.* What place is here then for any terrour, since the more state and heavenly magnificence, the more joy and glory?

7. THOU art afraid to think of Judgment; I had rather thou shouldst be awful, then timorous, when *St. Paul, Acts 24. 25.* discoursed of the Judgment to come, it is no marvel that *Felix* trembled: but the same Apostle, when he had pressed to his *Corinthians*, the certainty and generality of our appearance before the Judgment-Seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body, whether good or evil; adding knowing therefore the terrour of the Lord, we perswade men; but we are made manifest to God, *2 Cor. 5. 10, 11.*

8. THE holiest man may not be exempted from the dread, but from the slavish fear of the great Judge: we know His infinite Justice; and we are Conscious to our selves of our manifold failings: how can we lay these two together, and not fear? but this fear works not in us a malignant kind of repining at the severe Tribunal of the Almighty, but rather a careful endeavour so to approve our selves that we may be acquitted

ted by him, and appear blameless in his presence. How justly may we tremble, when we look upon our own Actions, our own deserts? but how confidently may we appear at that Bar, where we are beforehand assur'd of a discharge? *Being justified by Faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. 5. 1.* When we think of an universal Conflagration of the World, how can we but fear? but when we think of a happy restitution of all things in this day; how can we but rejoyce in trembling? *Acts 3. 21.*

9. THOU quakest at the expectation of the last judgment: Surely the very Majesty of that great Assize must needs be formidable: and if the very delivery of the Law on Mount Sinai, (*Exod. 19. 16, 18.*) were with so dreadful a Pomp of Thunder and Lightning, of Fire, Smoke, Earth-quakes; that the *Israelites* were half dead with fear in receiving it; with what terrible magnificence shall God come to require an account of that Law at the hands of the whole sinful generation of mankind?

10. REPRESENT unto thy thoughts, that which was shew'd of old to the Prophet Daniel in vision, *Dan. 7. 9, 10.* Imagine that thou saw'st, the Ancient of days sitting upon a Throne like a fiery flame; a fiery stream issuing and coming forth from before him; thousands thousands ministering unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before him; the judgement set and the Books opened: or as John, the Daniel of the New Testament, saw *Rev. 20. 11, 12.* A great white throne, and him that

that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away, and the dead both small and great standing before God; and the books opened and the Dead judged out of those things which were written in those books, according to their works.

11. LET the eyes of thy mind see beforehand that which these bodily eyes shall once see; and tell me how thou feelest thy self affected with the sight of such a judge, such an appearance, and such a process: and if thou findest thy self in a trembling condition, cheer up thy self with this that thy Judge is thine Advocate; that upon that throne there sits not greater Majesty then Mercy: it is thy Saviour, that shall sentence thee; how safe art thou then under such hands? Canst thou fear that he will doom thee to death, who dyed to give thee life? Canst thou fear he will condemn thee for those sins which he hath given his blood to expiate? Canst thou fear the rigour of that Justice which he hath so fully satisfied? or canst thou misdoubt the miscarriage of that soul which he hath so dearly bought?

12. NO, all this Divine State and Magnificence makes for thee. Let those guilty and impenitent souls, *Rom. 2. 5.* who have heaped unto themselves *Wrath against the day of wrath*, quake at the glorious Majesty of the Son of God; for whom nothing remains, but a fearful expectation of judgement, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries; *Heb. 10. 27.* but for thee, who art not only reconciled unto God by the mediation of the Son of his love, but art also incorporated

rated into Christ, and made a true Member of his Mystical body; thou art bidden together with all the faithful, *to look up, and lift up thy head; for now the day of thy Redemption is come, Luk. 21. 28. Ephes. 4. 30.*

13. AND indeed how canst thou do other, since by vertue of this blessed Union with thy Saviour, this Glory is thine; Every Member hath an interest in the honour of the head. *Rejoyce therefore in the day of the Lord Jesus, Phil. 2. 16.* And when all the Tribes of the Earth shall wail, *Rev. 1. 7.* Do thou Sing and call to the Heavens and the Earth to bear thee Company: *Let the Heavens rejoyce, and let the Earth be glad: let the Sea make a noise, and all that is therein: let the field be joyful, and all that is in it. Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoyce before the Lord: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth, and with righteousness to judge the world, and the people with his Truth, Psal. 96. 11, 12, 13.*

14. THOU art affrighted with the thought of that Great Day: think of it oftner, and thou shalt less fear it; it will come both surely, and suddenly; let thy frequent thoughts prevent it, it will come as a Thief in the night, without warning, without noise: Let thy careful vigilance alwayes expect it; and thy soul shall be sure not to be surprized, not to be confounded. Thine Audit is both sure and uncertain: sure that it will be, but uncertain the time. If thou wilt approve thy self a good Steward, have thine
Account

Account alwayes ready ; fet thy reckoning still even betwixt God and thy Soul: *Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing*, Matt. 24. 46.

15. LOOK upon these Heavens, and this Earth as Dissolving ; and think with St. Jerome, that thou hearest the last Trump, and the voice of the Arch-angel shrilling in thine ears, (as once thou shalt) *Arise ye dead and come to judgment*. Shortly, let it be thy main care, to live Soberly, Righteously, and Godly in this present world, looking for that Blessed Hope, and the glorious appearing of the Great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity ; *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like to his glorious body ; according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself*, Phil. 3. 21.

SECT.

S E C T. XVIII.

Spiritual Conflicts.

1. **T**HOU art affrighted at the thought of thy Spiritual Enemies: no marvel; neither Earth nor Hell hath any thing equally formidable. Those three things which are wont to make Enmity dreadful, and dangerous, (*Power, Malice, and Subtily,*) are met in them: neither is it easie to say in which of these they are most eminent. Certainly, were we to be match with them on even hands, there was just cause, not of fear only, but despair.

2. I could tremble, thou sayst, to think what Satan hath done, what he can do: with what Contestation he enabled the *Egyptian* Sorcerers to hold with *Moses*; how they turn'd every man his *Rod* into a *Serpent*; so that they seem'd to have the advantage for the time, of having many *Serpents* Crawling and Hissing in *Pharaohs* Pavement for one, *Exod.* 7. 12. How they turn'd the *waters into blood*, ver. 22. and how they brought *Frogs* upon the Land of *Egypt*, *Exod.* 8. 7. as if thus far the Power of Hell would presume to hold Competition with Heaven: what furious Tempests he raises in the Air, as that which from the Wilderness beat upon the four Corners of the

the House of *Job's* Eldest Son, and overthrew it; *Job* 1. 19. Now *Job* was the greatest man in the East; *Job* 1. 3. His Heir did not dwell in a Cottage, but a strong Fabrick, which could not stand against this *Hurricane* of *Satan*.

3. WHAT fearful Apparitions he makes in the upper Regions: what *Great wonders* he doth, causing *Fire* to come down from *Heaven* on the earth, in the sight of men, *Rev.* 13. 13. Lastly, what grievous Tyranny he exerciseth upon all the Children of *Disobedience*, *Eph.* 5. 6. Couldst thou look for any less, from those whom the Spirit of God himself, styles *Principalities, and Powers, and Rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickednesses in high places*, (*Eph.* 6. 12.) and the *Prince of the Power of the Air*, *Eph.* 2. 2.

4. SURELY it were no mastery to be a Christian, if we had not powerful Opposites; but dost thou not withall consider that all this Power is by Concession, and the Exercise of it but with Permission, and with Limitation? What Power can there be in any Creature, which is not derived from the Almighty? This Measure the Infinite Creator was pleased to communicate to them, as Angels, which they retain and Exercise still as Devils; their damnation hath stript them of their Glory; but we know not of how much of their strength.

5. AND seest thou not how their Power is bounded? Those that could in appearance turn their Rods into Serpents, could not keep all their Serpents from being devour'd of that one Serpent of *Moses*: those that could bring *Frogs* upon *Egypt*, cannot bring a baser Creature,
Lice,

Lice: those that were suffer'd to bring *Frogs*, shall not have power to take 'em away: restrained Powers must know their Limits, and we knowing them, must set Limits to our Fears; a *Lion* chain'd up can do less harm than a *Cur* let loose: what is it to thee how powerful the evil Spirits are, whilst they are by an over-ruling Power tyed up to their stake that they cannot hurt thee?

6. **THY** Fears are increas'd with their number; they are as many as Powerful: one *Demoniack* was possess'd with a Legion; how many Legions then shall we think there are to tempt those Millions of Men, which live upon the face of the Earth, whereof no one is free from their continual Solicitations to evil? That holy Man whom our counterfeit Hermits would pretend to imitate, in the Vision of his retiredness, saw the Air full of them, and of their snares for Mankind; and were our Eyes as clear as His, we might perhaps meet with the same Prospect: but be not dismay'd. Couldst thou borrow the Eyes of the servant of an holier Master, thou shouldst see, that *there are more with us, than against us.* 2 King. 6. 16. Thou shouldst see, the blessed Angels of God, pitching their Tents about thee, as the more Powerful, Vigilant, Constant Guardians of thy soul: these are those Valiant ones, which stand about thy bed; *They all hold swords, being expert in War; every one his sword upon his Thigh, because of fear in the night,* Cant. 3. 7, 8.

7. **FEAR** not therefore but make the Lord, *Even the most high, thy habitation: then there shall*

no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling : for he shall give his Angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy wayes, they shall bear thee up in their hands lest thou dash thy foot against a stone ; and besides this indemnity, Thou shalt tread upon the Lyon, and Adder ; the young Lion, and the Dragon shalt thou trample under thy feet, Psal. 91. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. In secular Enmity, true Valour may be oppress'd, but will not easily be daunted with Multitude ; *I will not be afraid of Ten thousand, (saith David) Psal. 3. 6. and Psal. 118. 12. They came about me like Bees, but in the Name of the Lord will I destroy them.*

8. I T was a brave Resolution in that General, who when one of his Soldiers could tell him, that the cloud of *Persian* Arrows shot at them, darkned the Sun ; be of good cheer, said he we shall fight in the shade : Answerable, whereunto, was that Heroical determination of *Luther*, who after his Engagements against all Threats, and Dissuasions, would go into the City of *Worms*, though there were as many Devils in it, as Tiles upon the Houses, and why should not we imitate this Confidence ? what if there were as many Devils in the Air, as there are spires of Grass upon the Earth ? *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble ; therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed ; though the mountains be carryed into the midst of the Sea, Psal. 46. 12. Behold, God is our salvation, we will trust, and not be afraid ; for the Lord Jehovah, is our strength and our song, he also is become our salvation, Isa. 12. 2. Let God arise, and let his enemies*

enemies be scattered; let them also that hate him flee before him; like as the smoke vanisheth, so shalt thou drive them away, Psal. 68. 1, 2.

9. **B**UT oh the malice of those infernal Spirits, Implacable and deadly; whose Trade is Temptation, and Accusation; whose delight is Torment; whose Musick is Shrieks, Howlings, and Groans, and Gnashing; whose main Thrift is no less than the Eternal Death and Damnation of miserable Mankind! Why should we expect otherwise from him, who is professedly the Manslayer from the beginning? That carries nothing but destruction both in his Name and Nature? that goes about continually like a roaring *Lion*, seeking whom he may devour?

10. **S**URELY, this Malignity is restless; neither will take up with any thing on this side Hell. But comfort thy self in this, that in spite of all the Malice of Hell, thou art safe. Dost thou not know that there stands by thee the Victorious *Lion* of the Tribe of Judah, whom that Infernal Ravener dare not look in the face? Dost thou not remember, that when the sentence was pronounc'd of Eternal Enmity, between the seed of the Woman, and the seed of the Serpent, it was with this Doom, *It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel*, Gen. 3. 15.

11. A bruise of a mans Heel is far from the Heart; but a bruise of the Serpents Head is Mortal; there his Sting, there his Life lies: neither did the Seed of the woman (Christ Jesus) this for himself (who was infinitely above all the Power and malice of the Devil) but for us the

impotent and sinful Seed of Man: *The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your Feet, saith the blessed Apostle, Rom. 16. 20. Under your feet ; not under his own only : of whom God the Father had long before said, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy Foot-stool, Psal. 110. 1.* What do I speak of the Future? Already is this great work atchieved: for the *Lord of Life, having spoiled Principalities and Powers, hath made a shew of them openly, Triumphant over them on his Cross, Col. 2. 15.*

12. A L L the Powers of Hell were dragg'd after this glorious Conquerour, when he was advanced upon that Triumphant Chariot. Look therefore upon these Hellish Forces, as already vanquished ; and know that *in all things we are more then Conquerors through him that loved us, Rom. 8. 37.* Only do thou by the Power of thy Faith, apply unto thy self this great work that thy Victorious Saviour hath done for the Salvation of all Believers.

13. P O W E R without Malice were Harmless ; and Malice without Power is Impotent : but when both are Combin'd together, they are Dreadful. But, whereas Malice hath two ways to execute Mischief, either Force, or Fraud ; the Malice of Satan prevails more by this latter ; so as the Subtilty of these Malignant Spirits is more pernicious then their Power : in regard of his Power, he is a *Lion, Psal. 7. 2.* in regard of his Subtilty, he is a *Serpent, Gen. 3. 1.* He is that *Old Serpent, Rev. 20. 2.* whose craft must needs be marvellously increased by the Age and Experience of so many thousand years.

14. S O much the more careful ought we to be,

be, *lest* as the Apostle saith, 2 Cor. 2. 11. *Satan should get an advantage of us*: This is that he seeks; and if our Spiritual Wisdom and Circumspection be not the more, will be sure to find. It is a great Word, and too high for us, which the Apostle speaks, 2 Cor. 2. 11. *For we are not ignorant of Satans devices.* Alas, he hath a thousand Stratagems, that our weak Simplicity is never able to reach: the wisest of us knows not the Deceitfulness of his own heart, much less can we dive into the Plots of Hell that are against us.

15. WE hear, and are forewarn'd of the *Wiles of the Devil*, Eph. 6. 11. But what his special Machinations are, how can we know, much less prevent? *Ev'n the Children of this World*, saith our Saviour, Luk. 16. 8. *are in their Generation wiser then the Children of Light*: How much more Crafty is their Father from whom their cunning is deriv'd? Be as mean as thou wilt, in thine own eyes; and say with Agur the son of Jakeh, Prov. 30. 2, 3. *Surely I am more brutish then any man, and have not the understanding of a man: I neither learned Wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the Holy.*

16. BUT what ever thou art in thy self, know what thou art, or mayst be in thy God: Consider what the man after Gods own heart impartially professes; Psal. 119. 98. *Thou through thy Commandments, hast made me wiser then mine Enemies; for they are ever with me: the Spirit of Wisdom is ours as well as Righteousness*, Deut. 34. 9. Eph. 1. 17. 1 Cor. 1. 30. And he who over-rules Hell, hath said, Matth. 16. 18. *The Gates of Hell*

Hell shall not prevail against his Church :

17. **W H A T** are the Gates of Hell, but the deep Plots and Consultations of those Infernal Powers ? The *Serpent* is the known *Emblem* of *Subtilty* : The *Serpents* of the *Egyptian* Sorcerers, were all devoured by *Moses* his *Serpent*. Wherefore ? but to shew us, that all the crafty Counsels and Machinations of hellish Projectors, are easily destroyed by the Power and Wisdom of the Almighty : when all was done it was the Rod of God that swallow'd 'em all, and was yet still it self, when they were vanquished : so as Satan thought to have won most honour to himself, ended in his shame and loss.

18. **W H A T** an Infinite advantage did the Powers of Darkness think to have made, in drawing our first Parents, by their subtil Suggestions into sin, and thereby into perdition, as imagining either Mankind shall not be, or shall be ours ? But the Incomprehensible Wisdom, and Mercy of our God disappointed their hopes ; and took occasion by Man's fall, to raise him up to a greater glory ; and so order it, that the *Serpents* nibbling at the heel, lost him the breaking of his head. What Trophies did that wicked Spirit think to erect upon the Ruines of miserable *Job*, and how was that Saint doubled both in his Estate and Honour, by his conquering Patience ?

19. **H O W** confidently did the Subtilty of Hell say, concerning the Son of God exhibited in the flesh ; *This is the Heir, Come let us kill him, and the Inheritance shall be ours ?* Matth. 21. 38. Mar. 12. 7. Luk. 20. 14. How sure work did they think

think they had made, when they saw him, through their subtil procurement, nailed to the cross, and dying upon that tree of Shame and curse; when they saw him laid under a Sealed and Guarded *Gravestone*? and now behold, begins their Confusion and his Triumph; Now doth the Lord of Life begin to trample upon *Death* and *Hell*; and to perfect his own Glory, and Man's Redemption, by His most glorious Resurrection.

20. A N D as it was with the Head, so it is with the Members: When *Satan* hath done his worst, they are holier upon their sins, and happier upon their miscarriages; God finds out a way to improve their evils to advantage, and teaches them of these *Vipers* to make *Soverain Treacles*, and safe and powerful *Trochises*. The Temptations of *Satan*, sent out from his *Power*, *Malice* and *Subtily*, are no other than fiery darts, for their Suddenness, Impetuosity, and Penetration: If we can but hold out *The shield of Faith* before us, *Eph. 6. 16.* They shall not be quenched only, but retorted in the face of him, that sends them; and we shall with the holy Apostle find and profess, that, *In all things we are more than Conquerors, through him that loved us; Rom. 8. 37.* And in a bold defiance of all the Powers of Darkness, shall say, (*ver. 38. 39*) *I am persuaded, that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

S E C T. XIX.

The Character of Patience.

1. **P**ATIENCE is a peaceable disposition of the whole man, not troubled, nor troublesome ; but abstaining from whatsoever may disturb either himself or others. In its Definition, we may observe these five heads, first the nature of *Patience* ; it is peaceable, and quiet ; not subject to sudden Passion, light Motion, or short Affections tending towards it ; but an Habitual Disposition, and due Composure of a mans self to it, which may bear the impression of *David's Motto*, Psal. 120. 7. *I am for Peace.*

2. **SECONDLY** ; the subject of *Patience* : the whole Man, not the Outward Man alone, but the Inward also : both the heart, and head ; the Mind and Manners, must be dispos'd, and compos'd towards it : principally indeed the Heart, *For out of it are the issues of Life* ; Prov. 4. 23. and unless there be a *Meek and Quiet spirit*, 1 Pet. 3. 4. It is impossible to acquire it, but withall there must be a quiet *Hand*, Psal. 24. 4. A quiet *Eye*, Job 31. 1. A quiet *Ear*, Prov. 2. 2. And a quiet *Tongue*, Psal. 39. 1. And all the parts and faculties of the Soul disposed to *Patience*.

3. **THIRDLY**, the parts of *Patience*, is
not

not being troubled, or being troublesome, neither Actively impatient in displeasing others, nor Passively impatient in being disquieted by others. Fourthly, the practice of Patience, is an abstinence from whatsoever may disturb, for so the word *Patience* (commonly Translated) doth import: and St. James doth thus describe it, *Jam. 1. 21. A laying aside, of all filthiness, and superfluity of maliciousness.*

4. FIFTHLY. The Object of *Patience*, or impatience, either in our selves, or others. Men disquiet themselves either by Causeless conceit of offence offer'd, when it is not: by being too suspicious, and *Inventors of evil things*, *Rom. 1. 30.* or by too much taking to heart, an offence when it is offered; by being too *Furious*, *2 Tim. 3. 3.* Men disturb others, either offering occasion of offence by being *Injurious* and *Disorderly*, *2 Thes. 3. 11.* or by bitter seeking Revenge, being full of Maliciousness, *Rom. 1. 29.* So men do likewise both disturb themselves, and others; when they do continue in their sins, and never think of Repentance: as *Elijah* told *Ahab*, *1 King. 18. 18. It is thou and thy Fathers house that trouble and disquiet Israel.*

5. BY this short view which we have taken of *Patience*, we may behold the true Character of a *Patient* Man: He is one made of a *Mild Nature*, and true *Christian Temper*, *Swift to hear*, *Slow to speak*, and *slow to wrath*, *1 Pet. 3. 4.* *Phil. 2. 5.* *Jam. 1. 19.* His Head is not overladen with the *Cares of this Life*, nor his heart with *Fears*, his eyes are not itching after *Vanities*,

ries, nor his Ears after *Novelties*, Luk. 21. 34. *Prov.* 29. 25. *Jer.* 22. 17. *Acts* 17. 21.

6. HIS *Hands* are not intermeddling with impertinent business, nor his *Feet* swift to run into *Evil*: His *Mouth* is far from *Cursing* and *Bitterness*, kept in as a *Bridle*, that it should not *Offend*, 1 *Thef.* 4. 11. *Prov.* 4. 26. *Rom.* 3. 14. *Psal.* 39. 1. *Psal.* 17. 3. His whole body is fit for a *Load* of Injuries, which he bears not out of baseness, and Cowardise, because he dares not *Revenge*, but out of *Christian Fortitude*, because He will not, *Rom.* 12. 13.

7. HIS *Arms* are strengthened by the *Mighty God of Jacob*, his hands are washt in *innocency*, and his brest is the *breastplate of Righteousness*, *Gen.* 49. 24. *Psal.* 26. 6. *Eph.* 6. 4. The hid-man of his heart, consisteth of *A meek and a quiet Spirit*, and his Bowels are *Bowels of Mercy, Meekness and Compassion*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 4. *Col.* 3. 12. His *Loins* are girt about with *Truth*, his *Knees* are pliable to *Bow*, his *Legs* to bear, and his *Foot* standeth in an *even place*, *Eph.* 6. 14. *Psal.* 26. 12.

8. HE is one that can moderate himself in *Prosperity*, and content himself in *Adversity*. His hopes are so strong that they can insult over the greatest discouragements; and His apprehensions so deep, that when he hath once fastened, he sooner leaveth his life than his hold. Contrariety of Events, do but Exercise, not dismay him; and when Crosses Afflict him, he seeth a *Divine Hand*, invisibly striking with those

those sensible scourges, against which he dares not Murmur nor Rebel.

9. HE troubleth not himself, with stirring Thoughts nor others, with needless Suits: He doth not intermeddle in other mens businesses, nor adventure upon rash Attempts, He offendeth not others with provoking Terms, nor taketh offence at others Actions, He lendeth not his Ear to idle Tales, nor soweth discord, or seeketh Revenge: but hath a meek Heart, a contented Mind, and a charitable Eye; His Tongue is Affable, His hand Peaceable, and his gesture Sociable. His behaviour is Neighbourly, his Judgement charitable, a loving Speaker, and a friendly Converser: He puts up all wrongs patiently, and wrongs none willingly. And such manner of Men ought we to be in all holy Conversation, and in our affections. I shall end with the words of the holy Apostle, and desire of God, that he would direct your hearts into his love, and into the patient waiting for him, 2 Thes. 3. 5.

I shall not think it improper to insert here a Relation of Sir *Thomas Moore*, that excellent pattern of *Patience*, who wholly resigned himself to the will of the Divine Providence.

Sir *Thomas* returning from beyond Sea after his Embassy, and being remote from his own House with the King, in the month of *August*, part of his dwelling House, and all His Barns being laden with Corn, were by a sudden fire consumed, his Lady by a Letter certified him of

of this sad mischance, to which he return'd her this answer.

Madam, *All health wished to you ; I do understand that all our Barns and Corn, with some of our Neighbours likewise are wasted by a fire, an heavy and lamentable loss, (but only that it was Gods will) of such abundance of Wealth; but because it so seemed good to God we must not only patiently, but also willingly, bear and submit to the hand of God so stretch'd out upon us. God gave whatsoever we have lost ; and seeing it hath so pleas'd him to take away what he gave, his Divine will be done : Never let us repine at this, but let us take it in good part, we are bound to be thankful as well in Adversity as in Prosperity ; and if we cast up our Accounts well ; this which we esteem so great a loss, is rather a great gain : For what is necessary and conducing to our Salvation, is better known to God than to us. I intreat you therefore to have a good heart, and to take all your Family with you to the Church, and there give thanks to God for all these things which he hath pleas'd to take away, as well as for his blessings which he hath bestow'd on us ; and to praise him for that which is left ; It is an easie matter with God if he please, to Augment what is yet left, but if he shall see good to take away more, even as it shall please him so let it be.*

And

And let Enquiry be made, what my Neighbours have lost and wish them not to be sorry: for I will not that my Neighbours shall suffer any thing by my loss, though I leave not my self any thing; and though all should be taken away, I pray thee, O Alice, be joyful in the Lord with my Children and all our Family; all these things, all we; are in the hands of the Lord. Let us therefore wholly depend upon his good will; and so no losses shall ever hurt us: Farewel

From the Court at Woodstock.
September 13th. 1529.

What a sincere Devotion was here to the Divine Will of God! What a Letter was here from a heart truly settled upon Heav'n? This Master of the Family had learn'd his Lesson well, and was grown a proficient in the Art of Patience. This was a man that by the supporting himself upon God's Providence, was able to bear all his losses sweetly. Behold an *Ostrich*, able to digest Iron! His Barns were burnt, but his mind was cool, *Patience* kept him in his uprightness. In a short space after God requited his Losses; in September he received this heavy news: In October he was promoted to be Lord Chancellor of England; so that not only Honour, but his means also were mightily enlarged, that now he need not repair his Barns, but may build new ones.

Certainly there is not in the World such a holy sort of Artifice, so Divine a charm to tie our God to us, as this of resigning our selves to him. We find the *Gibeonites* by yielding themselves *Vassals* to the *Israelites*, had their whole Army at their back to rescue them in their danger. *Jos. 10. 6.* and can we think God is less considerate of his Homagers and dependents? No certainly his Honour, as well as his Compassion is concern'd in the relief of those who have surrendred themselves to him.

From the Court at Westminster
September 13th. 1729.

What a sincere Devotion was here to the Divine Will of God! What a better was here from a heart truly rooted upon Heaven? This Master of the family had learn'd his Lesson well, and was a man that by the supporting himself upon God's Providence, was able to bear all his losses. Behold an Officer, able to digest from his Burns were burnt, but his mind was cool. I was kept him in his uprightness. In a short space after God requited his losses; in September he received this heavy news: In October he was promoted to be Lord Chancellor of England. He was not only rich, but his friends who were richly enlarged, that now he need not repair his Burns, but may build new ones.

The CLOSE.

Consisting of Scriptural Ejaculations
referring to the several Sections of
the before-going Treatise.

HA VING gone through this short Tract
of the *Art of Patience*, I shall now lay
down these following Ejaculations, as
being most necessary, and we have St. James's
Testimony for it, *Is any among you afflicted, let him*
pray. James 5. 13. This is the Great and Sovereign
Catholicon of the distressed Soul, which is
able to give ease to all the forementioned com-
plaints.

2. **F**OR *Meekness, Humility, and Patience*;
hearken unto thy Saviours Lesson, Matth. 11. 29.
Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and
ye shall find rest unto your Souls: And St. Paul,
earnestly beseeches us, Ephes. 4. 1, 2, 3. *To walk*
worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, with
all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, for
bearing one another in love. And David gives us
this comfort, Psal. 25. 8. *Them that are meek,*
shall he guide in Judgment: and such as are gentle,
them shall he learn his way. And Psal. 9. 18. *For*
the poor shall not alwayes be forgotten: The patient a-
biding

biding of the meek shall not perish for ever. Psal 37. 9. Wicked doers shall be rooted out, but they that patiently abide the Lord, those shall inherit the land. And then lastly, thou may'st say, to thy great joy and comfort, I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my calling, Psal. 40. 1.

3. **WHEN** thou are cast down upon thy bed of sickness, *Call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray, James 5. 14. This was Hezekiahs recipe, when he was sick unto Death; Then he turned his Face to the Wall, and prayed, 2 King 20. 1, 2. Pray with David, Psal. 6. 2. Have mercy on me O Lord, for I am weak; O Lord heal me, for my bones are vexed. And take the Counsel of the wise man: Eccclus. 38. 9. My Son, in thy sickness be not negligent, but pray unto the Lord, and he will make thee whole.*

4. **IF** thou art afflicted in Conscience, pray with David, Psal. 18. 5, 6. *The sorrows of Hell compassed me about, and the snares of Death prevented me: in my distress I called upon the Lord, and cryed unto my God.*

5. **ART** thou infested with importunate Temptations, pray earnestly with St. Paul, when the Messenger of Satan was sent to buffet him: *2 Cor. 12. 8. Thrice I besought the Lord that it might depart from me: And Holy David he complains while I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted; thy fierce wrath goeth over me: but unto thee have I cryed, O Lord; and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee. Psal. 88. 15, 16, 17.*

6. IF thou art disheartned with imbecillity of Grace, use *Dauids* prayer, *I am feeble and sore broken, I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart : Lord, all my desire is before thee.* Psal. 38. 8, 9.

7. WHEN thou art afflicted with loss of Reputation, and slanders of Evil Tongues, say with the Psalmist, *The mouth of the wicked, and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me : they have spoken against me with a lying Tongue : hold not thy peace O God of my praise.* Psal. 109. 1, 2.

8. IN time of publick Calamities, of War, Famine, or Pestilence, pray with good *Jehosaphat*, who pressed God with his Gracious promise made to *Solomon* : *If when evil cometh upon us, as the Sword, Judgment, or Pestilence, or Famine, we stand before this house. and in thy presence, and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help :* and shuts up his zealous supplication with, *neither know we what to do, but our Eyes are upon thee.* 2 Chron. 9. 12.

9. AT the loss of Friends, in thy affliction, pray and have recourse to thy God, as *Ezekiel*, when *Peletiah*, the Son of *Benajah* died: Ezek. 11. 13. *Then fell I down upon my face, and cryed with a loud voice, and said, ah Lord God ! Wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?*

10. IN time of poverty pray with *David*, Psal. 109. 24, 25, 26. *I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me : I became also a reproach*

to them, when they that looked upon me, shaked their heads : help me, O Lord my God ; Oh save me according to thy mercy.

11. IN time of Confinement pray with *Jonah* when he was shut up within the Living-Walls of the Whale ; *Jonah* 2. 1, 2. *I cryed by reason of my affliction unto the Lord ; and joyn with Asaph in prayer, Psal. 79. 11. Oh let the sorrowful sighing of the Prisoners come before thee, and according to the greatness of thy power, preserve thou those that are appointed to die.*

12. IN time of Exile, use *Solomon's* prescription ; *2 Chron. 6. 36, 37, 38, 39. If thy people be carried away into a Land far off, or near : yet if they bethink themselves in the Land whither they are carried and turn, and pray to thee, in the land of their Captivity. If they return to thee with all their hearts, and pray towards the Land which thou gavest to their fore-fathers, &c. then hear thou from Heaven, even thy dwelling place, their prayer, and their Supplication.*

13. HAST thou lost thy seeing, and hearing, make thy address to him that said, *Who hath made mans mouth, or who maketh the Dumb, and the Deaf, or the Seeing, or the Blind ? Have not I the Lord ?* *Exod. 4. 11. Cry aloud to him with Bartimeus, Mark 10. 47. 51. Lord, that I may receive my sight : And if thou be hopeless of thine outward sight, yet pray with the Psalmist, O Lord, open thou mine eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of thy Law. Psal. 119. 18.*

14. A R T thou afflicted with Sterility, pray with *Isaack*, who intreated the Lord for his Wife, because she was barren: and the Lord was intreated of him, and *Rebekah* his Wife conceived. Gen. 25. 21. And *Hannah*, she prayed, in bitterness of Soul unto the Lord, and wept sore, and received a gracious answer. 1 Sam. 1. 10.

15. A R T thou troubled and weakned for want of repose, pray with *Asaph*, Psal. 77. 3, 4, 1. I complained, and my Spirit was overwhelmed, thou holdest mine eyes waking, I am so troubled that I cannot speak; I cryed to God with my voice, unto God with my voice, and he gave ear unto me.

16. D O 'S T thou droop under the grievances of Old Age? Pray with *David*; Oh cast me not off in the time of Old Age, forsake me not when my strength faileth. O God thou hast taught me from my youth: now also when I am old and gray-headed, O God forsake me not. Psal. 71. 9, 17, 18.

17. A R T thou troubled and dismayed with the fears of death? Pray with *David*, Psal. 18. 3, 4, 5, 6. 13. My Soul is full of troubles, and my Life draweth nigh unto the Grave; I am counted with them that go down into the pit, I am as a man that hath no strength, free among the dead, thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deep; but unto thee have I cryed, O Lord, and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee.

18. D O 'S T thou tremble at the thoughts of Judgment? So did the man after Gods own heart;

Pfal. 119. 120. My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy Judgments; look up with Jeremiah, and say to thy Saviour, O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my Soul, thou hast redeemed my Life: O Lord, judge thou my cause. Lam. 3. 58, 59.

19. *A R T thou afraid of the Power, Malice, Subtilty of thy Spiritual Enemies? Use Psal. 59. 1. Deliver me from mine Enemies, O my God, defend me from them that rise up against me, O hide me from the secret Counsel of the wicked; and Psal. 25. 19, 20. Consider mine Enemies for they are many, and they hate me with cruel hatred: O keep my Soul, and deliver me: St. Paul prayed earnestly that he might be freed from the Messenger of Satan, whose buffets he felt, and was answered with, My Grace is sufficient for thee; so he sues for all Gods Saints, May the God of peace tread down Satan under your feet shortly. 2 Cor. 12. 9. Rom. 16. 19.*

20. *W H A T ever evil it be that presseth thy Soul, have speedy recourse to the Throne of Grace; pour out thy heart into the Ears of the Father of all Mercies, and God of all Comfort, and be sure, if not of redress, yet of ease: We have his word for it that cannot fail us, Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorifie me: Psal. 50. 15. Fashionable supplicants may talk to God; but be confident, he that can truly pray, can never be truly miserable: Of our selves we lie open to evils; our rescue is from above; and what intercourse have we with Heaven but by our Prayers? Our Prayers can de-
liver*

liver us from Dangers, avert Judgments, prevent Mischiefs, and procure Blessings, it is an Antidote against all Temptation, and a Sovereign Balsom for afflicted Consciences. It is the instrument of fetching down all good things to us, whether Spiritual or Temporal; No Prayer that is qualified as it ought to be, but is sure to bring down a Blessing according to that of the Wise Man, Ecclus. 35. 17. *The prayer of the humble pierceth the Clouds, and will not turn away till the highest regard it:* It sanctifies all good things to us, and sweetens the bitterness of our afflictions, it opens the Windows of Heaven, shuts up the Bars of Death, and vanquishes the powers of Hell; therefore let us not cease in making our addresses to him, who is the Fountain of all goodness; and *at whose right hand there is pleasures for evermore,* Psal. 16. 11. And let us with all lowliness as well of Body, as of Mind, according to that of the Psalmist say, *O Come let us Worship, let us fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker,* Psal. 95. 6. *For he is our hope and strength, and a very present help in trouble.* Psal. 46. 1.

F I N I S.

liver us from Dangers, avert Judgments, pre-
 vent Mischances, and procure Blessings; it is an
 Antidote against all Temptation, and a Sovereign
 Balm for afflicted Conscience. It is the in-
 strument of reaching down all good things to us,
 whether spiritual or temporal; No Prayer that
 is qualified as it ought to be, but is sure to bring
 down a blessing according to that of the Wise
 Man, Eccl. 3. 17. The prayer of the righteous
 is the Cloud, and will carry away all the high-
 ground of our iniquities, and will bring down
 the chastities of good things to us, and
 sweeten the bitterness of our afflictions. It opens
 the Windows of Heaven, shuts up the Doors of
 Death, and vantage the power of Hell; there-
 fore let us not cease in asking our addresses to
 him, who is the Father of all goodness; and
 who is the Father of all lowliness; as well
 as of all holiness. According to that of the
 Psalmist, Ps. 137. O Lord, when I weep, let me
 find grace before thee, Lord our Maker, Ps. 95. 6. For
 he is our help and strength, and a very present help in
 trouble. Psal. 46. 1.



FINIS

THE CONTENTS.

SECTION

1. **O**F the Connexion between Humility, Meekness, and Patience. Page 1.
2. In time of Sickness. p. 14.
3. Affliction of Conscience. p. 31.
4. Remedies against Temptations. p. 58.
5. Imbecillity of Grace. p. 69.
6. Loss of Reputation. p. 77.
7. Of publick Calamities. p. 84.
8. Loss of Friends. p. 98.
9. Of Poverty. p. 104.
10. Of Confinement. p. 112.
11. In Exile. p. 118.
12. Of Blindness and Deafness. p. 124.
13. Of Sterility. p. 135.
14. Want

The CONTENTS.

14.	<i>Want of Repose.</i>	p. 141.
15.	<i>Of Gray-Hairs.</i>	p. 146.
16.	<i>Of Mortality.</i>	p. 157.
17.	<i>Of Judgment.</i>	p. 173.
18.	<i>Spiritual Conflicts.</i>	p. 181.
19.	<i>The Character of Patience.</i>	p. 174.
	<i>The Close.</i>	p. 195.

FINIS.



